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CONTENTS

SOUTH KOREA

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

Controversial Point of Present Political Party Law (Yi T'aek-hwi; SINDONGA, Jun 80)	1
Lt Gen Chon Tu-hwan, Acting Director of Central Intelligence Agency (O Y'ong-t'aek; SINDONGA, Jun 80)	13
Definition of Those Called Opposition Forces Outlined (Yim Ch'un-ung; SINDONGA, Jun 80)	15

ECONOMY

Sites of Nationwide Labor-Management Disputes (Cho Song-chun; SINDONGA, Jun 80)	34
In-Depth Analysis of Sabuk Coal Mine Case (Kim Ch'ung-kun; SINDONGA, Jun 80)	78

8. KOREA/POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

CONTROVERSIAL POINT OF PRESENT POLITICAL PARTY LAW

Seoul SINDONGA in Korean Jun 80 pp 130-136

[Article by Yi T'aek-hwi, Seoul National University Professor of Political Science: "An Exhaustive Study of Party Politics"]

[Text] The political parties of our country have a number of built-in problems such as the frailty of their constitutional position in terms of the Political Party Law, restrictions on their membership base, lack of self-regulation for internal order, difficulties in representing minority interests and in securing funds. So they need to complement themselves in terms of system.

Raison D'etre for the Political Party Law

West Germany formed a political party law committee with a view to legislating a political party law, and the preamble of its report reads as follows:

"Parliamentary democratic politics is democratic politics by a political party system. Through political parties the people express their will. Political thought or effort which is not adopted by political parties has no hope today for being molded in the form of state will. Therefore, the destiny of the people and the state is decisively influenced by the spirit and intrinsic nature of political parties and their political formative power.

"The significance of Section 21 of the basic law (constitution) of West Germany which has given the legislators the mandate to legislate a political party law, stems precisely from such point. Along with laws governing elections, the provisions for a political party system form the basis of our constitutional political life. Now, in legislating a political party system, there are simply too many problems to solve, for there has been no precedent heretofore of legislation regarding the position, internal order, and functions of political parties and moreover, it above all calls for high qualifications such as initiative on the part of the legislators. For such reasons it is thought to be important to scientifically look into the limitations beforehand of the

targets of the political party law about to be legislated and of the feasibility of said legislation and in addition, to examine its prerequisites in terms of history, sociology, and jurisprudence."

This report enunciates that along with the election laws, the political party law forms the basis of democratic constitutional government. Still, it hints on the other hand that even though it is very difficult to clarify the valid ground and prerequisites in legislating a political party law, there are historical, social, judicial reasons compelling this legislation. That is why in the case of West Germany, it took 17 long years of many-aided study and examination following the introduction of a political party bill, coupled with national discussion on a second dimensional basis, to legislate this bill into a political party law. Viewed against such background, West Germany's political party law, by contributing to the development of democratic party politics since its enactment, has played in a way the affirmative role of expediting the development and stability of a political system based on the framework of such democratic party politics.

What makes possible the assessment that West Germany's political party law has been playing such an affirmative role is directly related to the extraordinary political situation West Germany has been in. As is well known, for the West German people, in a situation of confrontation with East Germany as the territory and the nation still remain divided, a totalitarian leftwing political party is intolerable. On the other hand, from a historical point of view, the tragic experience in the ruling system of Nazism has made the West German people deny the emergence of an ultrarightist political party.

In other words, the political reasons compelling the enactment of a political party law in West Germany were: first, to outlaw and ban the activity of a communist party; second, to prevent the reemergence of Nazism. There is reason to believe that through such safeguards of the political party law the party politics of West Germany has been able to strive for democratic development and accordingly, to hope for a stable development of West Germany's political system as well.

But the question whether the enactment of a political party law can generalize the logic that it plays an affirmative role in the development of democratic party politics gives rise to considerable skepticism. Almost all of the advanced democratic countries in Europe and America have never enacted any particular law regarding political parties. Nonetheless, these states have been achieving democratic political development on the basis of harmony and stability of a system of party politics.

Therefore, even though in West Germany, on account of such extraordinary political and historical conditions, the enactment of a political party law was required and the law has been playing an affirmative

role in contributing to the establishment of a democratic political party system, it is noteworthy that if an attempt was made to excessively generalize such logic, it could be counterproductive in the democratic development of party politics.

The Evolution of Party Politics and the Background of Enactment of the Political Party Law

In our country, following the postliberation restoration of sovereign power and in the course of preparations for parliamentary politics, political parties mushroomed, and in October 1946, South Korea Interim Legislative Council was formed, and in the course of the ensuing parliamentary politics, party politics came to develop. In Europe and America emerged a political party system as a product of an election system or a parliamentary system developed long ago; but on the contrary, in the Republic of Korea, because the political parties had to play the formidable role of preparing for parliamentary politics and of pressing on for political development, wild errors in implementation accompanied by political confusion and sacrifice could not be avoided.

In our country, the first acknowledgment of political party activities in modern sense was contained in U.S. Military Government Ordinance No 55 "Rules and Regulations Governing Political Parties" proclaimed on 23 November 1946. This ordinance defined as a political party "an organization composed of 3 persons or more engaged in political activity in any form," and the then politicians, anticipating the transfer of ruling powers from the U.S. Military Government, were all frenziedly forming political parties. Out of the south Korean political parties and social organizations which had filed request for consultation with the U.S.-USSR Joint Commission in July 1946, the U.S. side approved 422 of them.

In the days of the First Republic following the period of the U.S. Military Government typified by a flood of political parties, many of them 1-man parties, there was no legal ground providing protection for the political parties or their control, and only those political parties having seats in the National Assembly received the treatment as negotiating organizations within the Assembly under the National Assembly Law. Under the Administration of the Liberal Party which began as a government party, the opposition parties suffered extreme suppression; as a matter of fact, one party was ordered dissolved by the Public Information Director. Even under such circumstances, from the time of the Third National Assembly in 1954 the opposition forces, which had been gradually building up their mass base, began to appear in the form of a two-party system.

When the Liberal Party government forced the passage of the "sasa oip" [rounding off to the nearest integer] amendment to the constitution

in November 1954, all the opposition forces joined hands in launching the National Salvation Movement to Oppose Dictatorship and Protect Constitution which ultimately resulted in the formation of the Democratic Party. Following liberation many a political party came and went but most of them never went beyond the scope of a small organization. As opposed to this, from the mid-1950's began emerging mass political parties, organizing mass participation in politics. This may be considered as of great significance in the political history of the Republic of Korea.

Meanwhile, in this period the Progressive Party was formed as a reformist party and in May 1956, following the election of the president and vice president, the Democratic Reform Party was formed, a new socialist party that emerged in the system of party politics of the Republic of Korea. But because of the Anticomunist Law and National Security Law in effect, the formation and activity of a socialist party, let alone a communist party, were strictly banned or restricted; so in the end reformist and socialist parties became extinct and a system of separate conservative parties with similar political leanings in terms of political ideology came to emerge. Thus came to clearly appear a two-party system by the Fourth National Assembly. In the number of National Assembly seats, the Liberal Party held 126 seats, the Democratic Party 79 seats, the Unification Party 1 seat, independents 27 seats, showing the tendency of intensive consolidation centered on two parties.

Then the Liberal Party government fell in the 19 April revolution and in the National Council election in July 1960 the Democratic Party won two-thirds of the seats, thus creating the phenomenon of one-party supremacy over many other parties, and a few moderate socialist parties also made an advance. But power struggle among the leaders within the ruling party and the fragmentation of the ruling party stemming from chronic factionalism brought the loss of its ability to maintain the political system and in the end, caused a termination of party politics in the 16 May military coup. The National Assembly of the Second Republic, passing the "Law Regarding Political Movement" in October 1960, attempted to "insure the practice of democratic politics by having all political movements launched in a free, fair and peaceable manner" (Section 1 of the law) including the activities of political parties, but this law had no practical effect.

In the constitution of the Third Republic proclaimed in December 1962 were expansive complementary provisions for political parties. Under these constitutional provisions a political party law was enacted and proclaimed. Section 7 of the 1962 Constitution reads as follows:

1. Establishing political parties is free and a multi-party system is guaranteed.

2. A political party must be democratic in organization and activity and must have an organization necessary for participation in the molding of political thought of the people.

3. A political party receives the protection of the state. But if the objectives or activities of a political party are in violation of the democratic basic order, the government may appeal to the Supreme Court for dissolution of the political party and the political party is dissolved by verdict of the Supreme Court. (In the present constitution proclaimed in December 1972, "A political party receives the protection of the state" of Section 7, subsection 3, is amended to read: "A political party receives the protection of the state as provided by the law" and "the Supreme Court" in this subsection is amended to read "the Constitution Committee.")

It has been enunciated that the spirit and objectives of such provisions of the constitution are through and through for the purpose of insuring the establishment of a responsible, stable political party system and of promoting wholesome activities of political parties. In addition, the Political Party Law enacted in the same year (proclaimed in December 1962) pursuant to such objectives of the constitution defines a political party as "a voluntary organization of the people whose objective it is to participate in the molding of political thought of the people by promoting responsible advocacy or policies in the interest of the people and by nominating or supporting candidates for public office." (Section 2, Political Party Law) The law goes on to state that it is intended by restraining the formation of a multitude of small political parties through strengthened legal requirements for the formation of a political party to prevent disorderly, overheated competition generated by mushrooming political parties and to put legal restraints on the possibility of formation of small political parties whose organizational base is weak.

It might be said that the motive of enactment of a political party law in our country was not only for preventing such disorderly, overheated competition generated by a multitude of small political parties and removing inefficient politics but also for seeking the means of preventing the emergence of a totalitarian leftwing political party such as a communist party. This is so because it is only natural that our country should prevent the emergence of a communist party, viewed from whatever point of view, as long as our country is in confrontation with communist forces in a state of division of the nation and the territory the same as in the case of West Germany.

Now, the fact that the fundamental spirit of the Political Party Law, which was enacted in 1962 and has since been in effect, is targeted on the promotion of a wholesome two-party system is accepted as affirmative in itself, but it may be said that even as the social relations and social interests are becoming highly multidimensional following

the drastic industrialization of our economy and the rapid urbanization of our society, conditions are not mature yet to form and operate modern organizations as pressure groups which can politically represent the multidimensional social relations and that it is difficult to deny another aspect appearing in consequence that the law restrains the possibility of forming whole minority political parties capable of representing the multidimensional social interests.

Realistically speaking, among such multidimensional social interests there are some that can never be represented or coordinated by existing large political parties, and speaking in the context of political development aimed at democratization, such interests too should necessarily be represented politically. Therefore, the formation of honest political associations representing such social interests that existing large political parties are incapable of coordinating, is desirable and in terms of idea, also is in accord with the universal ideal of democracy that the tyranny of a majority must be prevented and minorities protected.

Meanwhile, the present Political Party Law of our country, as in the case of West Germany, does not explicitly ban the formation of anti-democratic, anti-state political forces such as communist party but that was one of the basic objectives in legislative background and such content is implicitly included in the objectives of the Political Party Law (Section 1). Moreover, inasmuch as this subject is specifically banned in laws other than the Political Party Law, there appears to be no need to reiterate it in the Political Party Law itself.

Political Party Laws of Foreign Countries

Our country, West Germany, and Argentina may be counted as representative countries which have political party laws among democratic constitutional states today. As opposed to most of the democratic states of Western Europe which have never enacted political party laws despite their long history of party politics, one comes to discover very similar reasons and objectives of the political party laws of states such as the Republic of Korea, West Germany, and Argentina.

The basic motive of enactment of the political party laws of these three countries is in outlawing political parties denying the existence of their state or democratic state and as such, concretely speaking, as pointed out earlier, it should be recognized that they contain the objective to ban the formation of communist party in terms of constitution or political party law.

In Argentina, the constitution enacted in 1949 contains constitutional provisions regarding political parties, under which provisions a political party law was enacted in the same year. The first Argentinian political party law was enacted in 1949 by dictator Peron espousing

progressive labor socialism, but as it was criticized as anti-democratic, it was amended in 1956. The 1949 constitution of Argentina, enunciating in Section 15 "The state does not recognize the freedom to obstruct freedom. This provision applies only as provided by the law and does not violate the right of individuals to express thoughts in the realm of academic theory," warns "the state does not approve national or international organizations of supporting theories in violation of the individual freedom which this constitution recognizes or in violation of the democratic system on which this constitution rests, regardless of the objectives."

Section 1 of the Argentinian Political Party Law enacted in 1956 under such constitutional provisions guarantees the freedom of formation and development of democratic political parties, and Section 2 provides that the Political Party Law applies only to political organizations participating in competition for political powers. Section 3 sets forth the basic requirements for a political party in four subsections. The basic requirements are, in essence, intended to protect the nurturing of democratic political parties and, rather than being anti-democratic, to ban the formation of political parties espousing "the freedom to violate democracy and freedom," for instance, political parties such as communist party. Section 6 of the law also sets forth fair and just provisions regarding the use of political funds of political parties.

In short, the purport of the Argentinian Political Party Law is to insure self-regulation in the free activities of political parties and their internal order and at the same time, through the provisions regarding the use of political funds, to prevent political corruption along with protecting and nurturing wholesome democratic party politics. Even though it can be said to be a forerunner as a modern political party law, if the control provisions for outlawing anti-democratic political parties are excessively applied, it can suffer the criticism that it will rather being a result in violation of the principle of democracy.

On the other hand, the Political Party Law of West Germany whether viewed from the process of its preparations or from the time spent, has a record-setting aspect in the legislative process. First of all, the enactment of the West German Political Party Law took 17 years of preparation and debate. A close examination of the preamble of the report of the West German Political Party Law Committee mentioned earlier will enable one to fully understand why the enactment of the Political Party Law required such thorough preparation and long time. Compared to this, it may be said that our country's Political Party Law was enacted in much too short time without the benefit of adequate examination.

The West German basic law enacted and proclaimed in 1949 provides in Section 21 as follows:

1. Political parties cooperate in the molding of political thought of the people. Their formation is free. Their internal order must conform to the democratic principle. Political parties must make public and explain the sources of their funds.

2. It will be defined as violating the constitution when a political party, whether in its objectives or in the acts of its party members, tries to damage or remove the free democratic basic order, or schemes to endanger the existence of the Federal Republic of Germany. The question of violation of the constitution will be determined by the Federal Court of Constitution.

3. Detailed provisions will be made by Federal laws.

Thus the West German basic law has recognized political parties as a constitutional system for the first time in German legal history, in the constitutional history of Western Europe. And under provisions of this basic law, detailed rules regarding political parties came to be enacted as Federal laws. Again, regarding the procedures for determining violation of the constitution by political parties under basic law section 21, subsection 2, detailed provisions were set forth in the Law of Federal Court of Constitution in March 1951. Moreover, regarding the effects in the event that a political party is determined to have violated the constitution under provisions of the Law of Federal Court of Constitution, detailed provisions were set forth in the Federal Election Law enacted in May 1956, thus complementing the provisions of Section 21 of the basic law with concomitant laws.

Let us now take a general look at the West German Political Party Law which consists of 41 sections.

Article 1 - Concept of a Political Party and Its Constitutional Position

Under provisions of Section 21 of the Basic Law a political party has its constitutional position recognized but because this does not make it a part of the state apparatus, the political party must preserve its basic free social character. In such context the West German Political Party Law adopts the modern concept of a political party that may be interpreted broadly in terms of sociology. In addition, the West German Basic Law guarantees the existence of a state of plural duties on a political party. On the other hand, the protection of the Basic Law, as provided under Basic Law Section 21, subsection 2, is guaranteed only for a political party compatible with the Constitution.

Article 2 - Internal Order

Under provisions of Basic Law Section 21, subsection 1, the internal order of a political party must be consistent with the democratic principle. The Political Party Law guarantees the self-governing right of a political party for its organization and action while imposing on

it the duty for democratization. This means that everything from the organization and action of a political party to the internal operations of the organization, even though achieved by its charter and regulations instituted in a self-governing manner, must be conducted by democratic means. In order that the public functions of a political party, which are constitutionally guaranteed, may be performed in a normal manner, harmony with the basic principle of democracy will be necessary not only from the aspect of its organizational objectives but also from the aspect of its internal organizational questions.

Article 3 - The Nomination of Candidates

The question of nomination of candidates in the election to public office at all level must be discussed in relation to the Federal Election Law and State Election Laws, party charter and party regulations. The Political Party Law has merely made the general provision that the nomination of candidates must be decided by secret ballots.

Article 4 - Subsidy to Election Campaign Expenses

The Political Party Law provides "A political party which, nominating candidates, participates in the general elections to the Federal Assembly, may receive a subsidy equivalent to an appropriate amount of expenses needed in the election campaign." And there is a provision that funds needed for this purpose be included in the federal budget. Of course, the content and limit of "a subsidy equivalent to an appropriate amount of expenses needed in the election campaign" still remain a point of dispute, but without such state subsidies the political parties of West Germany would never have been able to conduct election campaigns. It may be said that it is a fact that such state subsidies have the excellent effect of preventing political corruption related to election funds.

Article 5 - Accounting Report

Article 5 of the West German Political Party Law is a provision that satisfies the demands of Basic Law Section 21, subsection 1, "Political parties must make public and explain the sources of their funds." This provision, unlike the simple provisions under our country's "Law Regarding Political Funds," is a stern mandatory one imposed on political parties and as such, it should be viewed as greatly contributing to the prevention of corruption related to the procurement of political funds even though there is room for criticism in connection with the self-governing nature of political parties in their operations.

Article 6 - Execution of Verdict for Banning a Political Party in Violation of the Constitution

In this article are set forth provisions in detail regarding the execution of verdict of the Federal Court of Constitution declaring

a political party or its auxiliary organizations in violation of the Constitution under provisions of Section 21, subsection 2 of the Basic Law.

The Controversial Point at Issue and the Direction of Amendment of the Present Political Party Law

The present Political Party Law of our country, as pointed out in the legislative background of the law, has undergone partial amendments on three occasions since proclamation on 31 December 1962. Now, the present Political Party Law of our country, compared to the West German Political Party Law reviewed earlier, has similarities to be found in legislative objectives and motives but it may be said that there are significant differences apparent between the two. First of all, compared to the West German Political Party Law whose general legislative keynote is in the direction of positively expediting the vitalization of a democratic system of political parties, our country's Political Party Law, it may be said, contains in large measure provisions which, in light of the legislative objective to positively help the activities of political parties, may be viewed as rather restraining them. Therefore, if the importance of the role and functions of political parties in the process of modern democratic politics is taken into consideration, it must be said that the legislative keynote of our country's Political Party Law is one that has stemmed from a negative stand.

As a matter of fact, it may be said that in our country, the system of party politics or the activity of political parties has become atrophied rather than more lively after the enactment of the Political Party Law compared to the days before the enactment. What has brought this about, it may be said, is the working of many variables, but I will confine myself here to analyzing the cause insofar as it relates to the Political Party Law. But there is no need to reiterate that the cause analyzed here is none other than the controversial point at issue our country's Political Party Law is fraught with.

First, the constitutional position of our country's political parties is ambiguous. It may be said that under Section 7 of the present Constitution their constitutional position is recognized, but it is a controversial point at issue whether this provision, like that of Section 21 of the Basic Law of West Germany, regards political parties as a complete constitutional system, and it may be viewed that actually, our country's political parties, by laws other than the Political Party Law concomitant to the Constitution, find themselves in a position in parallel with organizations formed under general laws other than the Constitution and are thus unable to receive protection for their organization and activity on a constitutional dimension.

Second, our country's political parties are greatly restricted in their membership base. The Political Party Law only precludes (Sections 6

and 17) "public officials designated by a Presidential Executive Order and officers of government-operated businesses or of businesses in which the Government holds a majority of shares" from becoming promoters or members of a political party but in reality, when the position occupied and influence exerted by public officials (particularly high-level officials) and business executives in our country are taken into consideration, political parties are no more than minority interest groups and their advocacy and action empty ones without a national base, their representativeness being only in name.

Third, our country's political parties lack self-regulation in their internal order. It may be said that with their organizations traditionally bureaucratized, our country's political parties are undemocratic in their internal operations as well. The West German Political Party Law, sternly imposing the duty on the political parties to observe the democratic principle including openness, upward mobility, plurality, and self-regulation, induces democratization of their internal order (Section 2 of the West German Political Party Law) but our country's Political Party Law passively induces the removal of undemocratic character in their internal order. (Sections 28, 29, and 30 of the Political Party Law).

Fourth, with the organizational requirements for a political party strengthened by law, it renders difficult the emergence of minority political parties capable of representing the multidimensional interests of many minority groups. Of course, the objective of the strengthening of the organizational requirements for a political party reflected in the Political Party Law may be to establish a whole two-party system but if, in light of the realities wherein there do not exist modern pressure groups representing the multidimensional minority interests or a particular idea, it is difficult to have their stand coordinated or represented by large political parties, then there has to be a way or mechanism to project their rights and interests into the political process.

Fifth, our country's political parties do not have publicly secured their financial sources for funds including election campaign expenses. The "Law Regarding Political Funds" provides that the Central Election Management Committee receives and distributes political funds, but this law has become all but a useless thing; consequently, what is actually happening is that our country's political parties are procuring their funds from unofficial, private financial sources. So constantly arises the question of irrationality surrounding the procurement of political funds. In particular, in connection with this question it is believed there is much need to study, for reference, the content of the provisions of Article 4 of the West German Political Party Law.

Solutions to the aforementioned questions call for both political and legal efforts. Above all, it is imperative to seek out a system capable

of enabling political parties to play their role as independent variables in the political process by developing political parties into policy-oriented parties and guiding elections primarily based on political parties; next it is imperative to search for a system capable of democratizing the internal order of the political parties by such means as expanding an elite cycle within the political parties and the route to public nomination of public office candidates.

In conclusion, unconstrained by the traditional two-party system or by a multiparty system, a system of political parties capable of bringing about political stability should be established. And the search in such direction should be conducted in relation to substantial politicocultural conditions. Of course, it goes without saying that the establishment of such a system constitutes a precondition for a peaceful transition of political powers and at the same time, a variable expediting it.

12153

CSO: 8132/1244A

8. KOREA/POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

LT GEN CHON TU-HWAN, ACTING DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Seoul SINDONGA in Korean Jun 80 p 137

[Article by O Kyong-t'aek: "Man of the Hour"]

[Text] Lately the world seems to be taking increasing interest in Gen Chon Tu-iwan, who has been appointed Acting Director of Central Intelligence Agency. It is none other than General Chon who has become most famous following the historic "26 October Incident." After 26 October, as Director of Joint Investigation Headquarters of the Martial Law Command, he personally released the full details of investigation into this incident and appeared in closeup on TV screen and newspapers. Moreover, as national and international interest in General Chon became more heightened with his appointment on 14 April Acting Director of Central Intelligence Agency, he takes every opportunity to emphasize: "It is my belief that the military should not, and must not take part in politics."

He goes on to say "I am not only not interested in politics but do not know about politics" and adds "Had I been interested in politics, I would have taken off my uniform at the time of 16 May [military coup] and would have served out as the director of some government board or agency before retirement."

General Chon has volunteered many times "From young age I admired the military so much that I finally became a military man and I want to keep on wearing the uniform." Even as he was appointed Acting Director of Central Intelligence Agency, he himself and those close to him repeatedly emphasize "He may be helping political development consequentially but will never change his track."

At a press conference after the 26 October incident General Chon explained "I believe that the spiritual heritages of the Koreans are loyalty, righteousness, etiquette, filial piety. But the 26 October incident is one that defiled all four of them."

General Chon has turned 49 this year. Born in Taegu, North Kyongsang Province, he entered the Military Academy on graduation from Taegu

Technical High School. He is a graduate of the Eleventh Class of the Military Academy. As from the Eleventh Class onward, the Military Academy became a 4-year school, it would appear that the graduates of that class onward take special pride in themselves over their seniors. So at one time, the "Eleventh Class of the Military Academy" was referred to as the "First Regular Class."

It is said that General Chon made himself known as a soccer team player (goal keeper) in his days of high school and Military Academy. He was commissioned a second lieutenant on graduation from the Military Academy in 1955 and a company commander of the 72d regiment of the 25th Division in 1958, thus serving as unit commander at various levels on the front line and in the rear; commanding officer of the 30th battalion of the Capital Guard Division in 1967; commanding officer of the White Horse 29th regiment in Vietnam in 1970; commanding officer of the 1st Special Airborne Brigade in 1972; commanding officer of the 1st Division in 1978; National Security Commander from February 1979 until the 26 October incident. He was promoted to Lieutenant General as of 1 March this year.

He studied at the U.S. Army Infantry School twice, in 1958 and in 1960; while commanding officer of the 1st Division, he discovered the third tunnel of the northern puppets in 1978, for which he was conferred the May 16 National Medal (for security).

General Chon, who emphasizes to his subordinates "Always be loyal to your superiors. This is none other than being loyal to your country," is widely known in the military as a straightforward man, as a man of resolute character. It should be more appropriate to wait for a while before evaluating General Chon, front-runner of the Eleventh Class of the Military Academy, Security Commander, and concurrently Acting Director of Central Intelligence Agency.

12153

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6. KOREA/POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

DEFINITION OF THOSE CALLED OPPOSITION FORCES OUTLINED

Seoul SINDONGA in Korean Jun 80 pp 150-160

[Article by Yim Ch'un-ung, political reporter of the SEOUL SINMUN]

[Text] What is called the opposition may be an overall concept of the direct victims of yusin and the invisible forces who have supported them, the meaning of their sufferings and the position and image of their struggle.

Real Image and Virtual Image of the Opposition

What is the "opposition?" What is the substance of the opposition anyway? Many people ask such questions. But there is no one giving an illuminating answer. Consequently, at times the opposition has its real image unreasonably ignored or its virtual image excessively exaggerated. People frequently see the shadow but not the substance of the opposition. Seemingly, it is in the eye and notion of the beholder that the opposition is a monster which looks very big or very small.

The opposition has long existed in essence since yusin. But it seems there is still no definitive concept of it. Everyone is aware of the opposition but no one has been able to draw an accurate picture of its physical form [A drawing is shown of an iceberg in the shape of a question mark, the cone of which is shown as the tip of the iceberg indicating the opposition forces and the submerged part of it as containing professors, students, politicians, workers, and religious followers.]

As it happened, it was the so-called tangkkwonp'a [political party right group] centered around President Kim Yong-sam of the New Democratic Party that asked "what is the opposition anyway?" This happened at a time when following the 26 October incident an overall opposition union appeared to be the wish of the people and an opposition union centered around the New Democratic Party and Kim Tae-chung loomed as a major premise. Essentially, what is called the wish of

the people has an elusive aspect. This is a word used ever so often but to people engaged in politics, it has no particular magic touch. For two separate forces to unite, it is in the scheme of things that there has to be bargaining and that for bargaining there has to be an arithmetic of what is ours and of what is yours. So the tangkkwonp'a questioned what is the opposition?

At that time many people expected to see what the opposition is really like in substance. But this bargaining was not something that could be brought off, to begin with. Because the opposition is not an arithmetical concept. The tangkkwonp'a pressed its question to the opposition how many members there are on an administrative council level and who are the people on a standing committee level, as provided in the constitution of the New Democratic Party. But the opposition had nothing particular to offer in this kind of bargaining, to begin with. So-called "leaders of the opposition" are people who have nothing in particular to do with the provisions of the constitution of the New Democratic Party.

The self-styled leaders of the opposition, when asked what is the opposition, give a variety of answers such as "the victims of yusin," "the forces that have struggled by action in direct confrontation with yusin and have experienced sufferings," and "a solidified body of consciousness that has challenged the system by action."

If the opposition, as they contend means only those who have done an anti-system movement, i.e., the victims of yusin, then the opposition is something that does not count very much. Its number is several thousand nationwide and its physical form is easy to grasp. A list of names alone, which investigative organs are believed to have in possession, will suffice. Again, the expression "a solidified body of consciousness" is of no particular significance at this point in time in looking into the political tomorrow of the opposition.

Those popularly known as leaders of the opposition emphasize "conscience in action." They argue that "conscience in inaction is siding with the evil." If their contention is correct, then the criticism is heard that what is called the opposition is, in the final analysis, no more than an extreme minority of radicals.

But what accounts for the considerable significance attached to the opposition at present may probably be the existence of a broader base of the "conscience in inaction" quietly supporting "conscience in action." In the final analysis, it may well be a metaphysical concept of the physical form of the opposition being an overall body containing everything such as the direct victims of yusin and the invisible forces who have supported them, the meaning of the sufferings of the victims and the position of the struggle they have launched as well as the image the opposition has been implanting in the people.

Therefore, depending on who is the beholder, the opposition appears different in size and color. Those who want to see it as small in size try to dig up the names of a few people who have been put behind bars while those who want to see it big in size speak of the meaning of the opposition and its supporting forces. On account of such peculiarity in character of the opposition, it cannot but be said that the considerably concretized formula under which bargaining was conducted last March between the New Democratic Party and the opposition with the number of members of the Central Standing Committee of the New Democratic Party for a subject of discussion had no feasibility from the outset. Why the press at that time did not give up a ray of hope in the bargaining, such lack of feasibility notwithstanding, is because the reporters failed to detect another trump card held by Kim Tae-chung in the form of his political decision.

The 1 March Democratic National Salvation Declaration, the Root and Trunk

Anyway, in order to grasp the opposition, we first need to understand the visible part of the physical body of the opposition. To this end, we must examine the process of its formation, its organization, and its members.

Following the October yusin, resistance against the system occurred in many areas of society. But because it did not have an organization, it was fragmented and lacked coherence. The first earnest post-yusin anti-system organization was the National Conference for Restoration of Democracy which emerged at the end of October 1974, two years after yusin.

The promoters of this organization numbered 50, who were central forces of the religious circles, the academic world, the press and politicians. It is interesting to see side by side the name of Kim Yong-sam who contends that it is the New Democratic Party which is playing the leading role in the new times and the name of Kim Tae-chung who argues that it is the opposition forces which have been fighting outside the system that are playing the leading role in the new times.

Toward the end of that year began to be formed regional conferences as local organizations on an administrative district unit basis under the umbrella of the National Conference for Restoration of Democracy, and about the same time the Youth Conference for Restoration of Democracy started functioning. Leaders of the Youth Conference included Pak Chong-hun (Deputy Director of the ROK Politicocultural Research Institute), Paek Ch'ong-su (ex-editor in chief of the Voice of Seed Grain), Chon Tae-yol (ex-director of the Propaganda Bureau of the Unification Party). This organization was something like an action group under the National Conference.

The following year, in January 1975, so-called anti-system writers such as Kim Pyong-kol and Yi Ho-ch'ol released "a statement on the current situation." But the Emergency Decree No 9 proclaimed in May 1975 applied the brakes on all such resistance movement.

What served as a turning point for the scattered anti-system leaders to regroup and for bringing the sporadic resistance movement into one framework was the "1 March Democratic National Salvation Declaration" incident at the Myongdong Church in Seoul on 1 March 1976. Eleven leaders signed the declaration: politicians such as Yun Po-son, Kim Tae-chung, Chong Il-hyong; Christians such as Ham Sok-hon, Mun Ik-hwan, Mun Tong-hwan, Yun Pan-ung; academicians such as Yi Mun-yong (Korea University), So Nam-tong (Yonsei University), An Pyong-mu (Hanguk Theological College), Yi U-chong (Seoul Women's University).

What makes this incident, known as "the 1 March incident" or "the Myongdong incident," significant is that it provided a turning point for a union of the opposition comprising anti-system leaders of all strata such as the political, religious, and academic circles. This union has become the root and trunk of today's opposition.

But it was in January 1979, some three years after the incident, that 13 scattered anti-system organizations developed into an organization with the long name of "National Union for Democracy and National Reunification." Its principle, however, had already been established about the time of the 1 March incident.

Even in the process of the 1 March incident developing into the National Union for Democracy and National Reunification there was a constant activity and a thread of connection among the opposition forces.

In the latter part of November 1977 pastor Cho Nam-ki, a representative of the NCC Human Rights Committee, held a seminar at Pundo Hall at Changch'ung-tong. The attendants were mostly religious leaders, plus some ex-journalists. This seminar, attended by 32 in all, provided an opportunity for the formation on 29 December of the same year of ROK Human Rights Movement Council centered around the attendants. Pastor Cho, a representative of the NCC Human Rights Committee, was elected chairman; Father Kim Sung-hun, vice chairman; then chairman of Tonga Struggle Committee An Song-yol, director; and pastor Kim Sang-kun, secretary.

This ROK Human Rights Movement Council was expanded and reorganized the following year on 31 May 1978 at a meeting held at An'guk-tong (the home of ex-president Yun Po-son). As new chairman elder Ham Sok-hon was elected, and as vice chairmen the four of pastor Mun Ik-hwan, Father Kim Sung-hun, journalist Song Kon-ho, and Madame Kong Tok-kwi, wife of ex-president Yun. The following month, June, the council changed its name to Democratic National Union, and Kim Tae-chung was

welcomed into the union upon his release from the Seoul University Hospital on 27 December of the same year, and in January 1979, the union was expanded and reorganized, changing its name back to "National Union for Democracy and National Reunification."

The 1 March incident not only gave form to the opposition but established the doctrine of the opposition at the same time.

The Democratic National Salvation Declaration which was produced at the time of the 1 March incident was carried forward in toto in the Democratic National Salvation Declaration issued on the 60th anniversary of the 1 March Holiday in 1979 after the formation of the National Union. This declaration contended "Putting an end to the yushin system, to the absolute one-man power and his long stay in the seat of power, which is the only road to the restoration of democracy where the people who have fallen into the plight of a slave will become the holders of sovereign power, is the road to our survival, the path we must pursue." The declaration goes on to state "We pledge that we will steadfastly launch a peaceful struggle for the restoration of democracy and will join the struggle ranks, unafraid of whatever sacrifice." The Democratic National Salvation Declaration shows that the immediate goal of the opposition is putting an end to yushin and restoring democracy. So it may be said that by the 1 March incident of 1976 the principle for a union of the opposition was established and that by the formation of the National Union in 1979 the structure of the opposition was formed.

Now, there is a need to examine the entire membership of the National Union headed by three joint chairmen of ex-president Yun Po-son, Kim Tae-chung who is a former New Democratic Party presidential candidate, and elder religious leader Ham Sok-hon. But its membership is yet to be made public. They seem to think it is not time yet to make their names public. Even those who are supposed to be in the know do not open their mouth.

But most of the names of the Central Committee membership, i.e., the faces of real power behind the National Union and its heart, are known to the journalists. How important the names of general members other than the Central Committee which decides and executes everything of the National Union is questionable. So is their number.

Except for the three joint chairmen out of the 26-member Central Committee, to take a look at the remainder, the following are the representative ones: Mun Ik-hwan (pastor) who holds the position of an executive secretary of the Central Committee, at the top of them; Ko Un (writer); Pak Hyong-ku (pastor); Yi U-chong (professor); Kim Sung-hun (Catholic Priest); Ye Ch'un-ho (national assemblyman); Kim Chong-wan (politician); Kim Yun-sik (ex-national assemblyman); Pak Chong-t'ae (ex-national assemblyman); Yi Mun-yong (professor); So Nam-tong (professor); An Pyong-mu (professor); Ham Se-ung (Catholic priest);

Kye Hun-che (politician); Kim Pyong-kol (writer); Yi T'ae-yong (lawyer); Mun Tong-hwan (pastor); Paek Ki-wan (director, Paekpom Thought Research Institute); Kim Kwan-sok (pastor); Han Sung-hon (lawyer); Paek Nak-ch'ong (professor/critic); So Kyong-sok (executive secretary, Industrial Evangelical Association); Sim Chae-kwon (Seoul Commercial College student). They are also the faces representing today's opposition.

Thirteen Anti-System Organizations

It was the Democratic National Union that was the parent of the National Union for Democracy and National Reunification but the anti-system organizations that played the role of a midwife in the birth of the National Union number 13. There is practically no one now who precisely remembers the names of the 13 organizations. This is only natural because a considerable of the 13 organizations existed in name only and even those which had organizational form had interlocking leaders, and it was difficult to tell the exact names of the 13 organizations or who represented which organizations and who were their leading members.

For example, members of the Discharged Professors Council were also members of the Democratic National Union and of the Human Rights Movement Council. When the ROK Human Rights Movement Council was expanded and reorganized into the Democratic National Union, the Human Rights Movement Council was not exactly dissolved as the council was the sort of an organization that used to meet whenever necessary. There is no way to explain why the anti-system organizations of the opposition were in such a complicated state except to say that this was unavoidable under the circumstances prevailing at the time.

The names, which are a subject of discussion here, are merely mentioned as a matter of convenience and they are neither organizations that were registered nor ones that had organizational rules which social organizations are supposed to have. Under the yusin system this kind of anti-system organizations could neither be legal nor be numerically big enough to have some kind of organization or visible form. The "persecuted people" would get together at a coffee shop or at a fellow victim's home and when they gave some suitable name to their meeting, they became an organization. When a few of such organizations got together, they became a union. That is what was happening.

Even the handful of people who would know the memberships of the 13 organizations which exist if only in name are hesitating to make the membership lists public. It would appear that even if made public, the membership lists would be of little significance.

As pastor Mun Ik-hwan, executive secretary of the National Union, claims, it may be that there is no need to formalize them.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY

YOUTH CONFERENCE FOR
RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY

REGIONAL
CONFERENCES

1 March Incident

NATIONAL UNION FOR DEMOCRACY
AND NATIONAL REUNIFICATION

Discharged Professors Council
Free Practicing Writers Council
Democratic National Union
Democratic Constitutional
Government Tongjiho
Political Offenders Tongjiho
Tongjiho for the Incarcerated
Council for Conscientious Offenders
Families

ROK Human Rights Movement Council
Democratic Youth Human Rights
Council

Christian Association for
Restoration of Democracy
Church Women's Union
Paekpom Thought Research Institute

ROK Catholic
Farmers
Association

Urban Industrial
Evangelical
Association

Priest Group
for Embodiment
of Justice

Lawyers of
the Opposition

Reinstated
Students Group

Some
ex-Journalists

KIM TAE-CHUNG'S
Direct Affiliates

Politicocultural Research Institute
Namhwa Research Institute

But there is a need to examine those organizations still being gossiped from people's mouth to mouth which were the parent of the National Union or played the role of a midwife for it, or those which still continue to exist in the form of consultative apparatus of the National Union even though they were not among the 13 organizations.

Among them there are those which have been dissolved to all intents and purposes or those which are inactive even though alive if only in name. Of course there are those which became more active following the 26 October incident and those which newly emerged recently.

Anyway, let us enumerate the organizations embraced in the National Union. They are: Democratic National Union (Ham Sok-hon, representative); Democratic Constitutional Government Tongjihoe (Kim Chong-wan, representative); Discharged Professors Council (Song Nae-un, representative); Free Practicing Writers Council (Kim Pyong-kol, representative); Political Offenders Tongjihoe (Kye Hun-che, representative); Council of Families of the Conscientious Objectors (Kong Tok-kwi, representative); ROK Human Rights Movement Council (Ham Sok-hon, representative); Democratic Youth Human Rights Council (Yi U-hoe, representative); Christian Association for Restoration of Democracy (Pak Hyong-ku, representative); Church Women's Union (Kong Tok-kwi, representative); Paekom Thought Research Institute (Paek Ki-wan, representative).

In addition, even though not directly related to the National Union, some ex-journalists are within the orbit of the National Union. And even though it has been dissolved, the Nationalism Research Institute (Pak chong-hun, representative) had a thread of connection with the National Union.

The highly Visible Democratic Constitutional Government Tongjihoe

Let us take up those organizations among them which became more active after the 26 October incident and those organizations which, even though currently not active out in the front, are nevertheless worthy of attention.

Most visible among them is the Democratic Constitutional Government Tongjihoe which opened its office last February on the third floor of Hyesong Building at 5 of 614, Ahyon-tong, Map'o-ku, Seoul. Although this is nominally a member organization of the National Union, it is known as a matter of fact to have a bigger organization than the National Union. This organization has close relations with Kim-Tae-chung's political leanings.

The person in charge of this organization is Kim Chong-wan, once close to ex-National Assemblyman Chong Il-hyong and now Kim Tae-chung's confidant. This Tongjihoe is active to the extent that at one time it was rumored to have secured some 600,000 members nationwide. Although it is almost certain that 600,000 is an exaggeration, it is said that the organization has extended its hand on a ri-tong basis.

Kim Chong-wan states: "Although existing political parties pursue the organizational policy of one person per electoral district, we are not restricted in number." This is meant to be an explanation that their flexibility in organizational aspect compared to existing political parties could place them in a more favorable position organizationally. Members of this Tongjihoe are either politicians or political aspirants. This present expansive organization began coming into being after the 26 October incident but it cannot be said that all the people who are gathered here are people of the opposition in the strict sense that they have fought against the yusin system in direct confrontation.

The Tongjihoe is an organization formed by politicians of the opposition immediately following the so-called 1 March incident of 1976, emphasizing the responsibility of politicians. It is a fact that the anti-system movement used to be conducted mainly centered around the religious circles on account of the restrictions placed by yusin on political assembly or the activity of political organizations, and it may be said that it is this Tongjihoe that emerged as an expression of self-examination in this connection.

But after the 26 October incident, with practically all leaders of the opposition aspiring to politics brought together, the organization has undergone considerable changes from the original purport. It is reported that among them are 68 ex-National Assemblymen and some 50 academicians on the level of assistant university professor or higher, 35 lawyers (mainly local lawyers of Pusan) and 71 leaders who were once incarcerated.

The Tongjihoe membership includes some 100 religious leaders such as pastor Y and writers such as poet Y, and a considerable number of high-level reserve military officers such as reserve Marine Maj Gen Pak Song-ch'ol who is serving as deputy director of Kim Tae-chung's private secretariat. That the Tongjihoe which claims to be an organization of political aspirants has thus embraced academic and religious leaders and lawyers of the opposition will, it appears, tend to become a significant concern index of many people if these leaders will really take part in real politics.

The Tongjihoe is operated by a 9-man committee represented by Kim. The nine members are National Assemblyman Ye Ch'un-ho, ex-National Assemblymen Kim Yun-sik, Yi Sang-ton, Yu Ch'ong, Yang Sun-chik, Pak Chong-t'ae, Kim Sang-hyon, and Kye Hun-che (politician), Kim Ch'ung-sop (ex-professor of Kyongbuk University). As two of them, Yang Sun-chik and Pak Chong-t'ae, have since been taken into custody on charges of violation of the martial law for "illegal assembly at YWCA," their places have been filled by ex-National Assemblymen Kim Tai-su and Kang Pong-nyong.

The Discharged Professors and Writers Organization, Too

The Discharged Professors Council is now being turned into a friendship organization to all intents and purposes. Those who used to meet frequently now meet only once in a while to talk about the changed world. Most of the discharged professors such as Han Wan-sang (Seoul University), Yi Mun-yong (Korea University), Kim Yun-hwan (Korea University), Kim Tong-kil (Yonsei University), So Nam-tong (Yonsei University), Song Nae-un (Yonsei University), Kim Ch'ang-kuk (Yonsei University), An Pyong-mu (ROK Theological College), No Myong-sik (Songgyungwan University), Yi U-chong (Seoul Women's University), Song Ki-suk (Chonnam University), have since returned to the campus. But two or three professors such as Professor L among them are known to be frequently meeting with political leaders of the opposition and also actually working as political consultants. Most of the professors who have returned to their former posts, are maintaining the posture of quietly watching the political situation. They have stated they are hoping that there will not develop a situation where they may be compelled to make political advocacy.

It is understood that those professors dismissed since yusin have numbered some 160 but included in them are professors removed from their positions for reasons other than anti-system activities and there are no statistics available on the exact number of professors dismissed purely for anti-system activities. Whatever their exact number, their position, especially the role of those professors who have returned to the campus, is important. This is so because the relative importance of the universities in the age of democratization has grown and in another sense, the influence of the reinstated professors on the students will be considerable.

It does not seem likely that the reinstated professors will again venture out to the political front line. Although a few of them are still standing close to the political sphere, most of them wish to remain on the campus. But the situation could change if a political party emerged espousing an ideology compatible with their political beliefs. A new political party which will be needing their ideas and strength would issue a recall order to every prospective person, and it is anticipated that a considerable number of them who hold strong political consciousness will even volunteer. Whether or not they participate in politics, the reinstated professors are a pillar of the opposition.

The Free Practicing Writers Council which has declared "We may not have anything to do with political parties but we take part in politics," is an organization steadfast and enthusiastic in action.

When the council issued "a statement on the current situation" in January 1975 it had some 120 members and although its membership has since shrunk considerably, the writing activities of its members are brisk. Early last April the council published a book "Practicing

literature," a collection of writings of the members. This was its first attempt at MOOK in book form with electric forte of the magazines and monographs being experimented in various countries of Western Europe.

The works carried in the book such as Ko Un's exude a rich aroma of the opposition. Chairman Kim Pyong-kol states: "We will not jump onto the political front line but for the political goal of 'democratization,' we will continue our struggle even outside the realm of literature." He adds: "No matter which stratum comes to power, we will always maintain the stand of a critic." With Kim Chi-ha still behind bars, Chairman Kim, Paek Nak-ch'ong, Yi Ho-ch'ol, Sin Kyong-nim, Ko Un, and Yang Song-u are the central characters.

Most of their works have not seen light all this while and even now their public release is subject to considerable restrictions. But once their writings are freely published and all those writings that have been lying buried are brought out all at once, they will cause a considerable stir in society. Their writings will give a breath of fresh air to the readers who have long been accustomed to soft writings. Their writings also will have a persuasive power and an extremely delightful impact. But at the same time, their writings may be a shock of some kind to many people.

The Paekpom Thought Research Institute has published quite a number of books such as "Paekom's sayings," "The road I have Walked" (Kim Ku's autobiography), and "Declaration of the Korean Revolution" (by Sin Ch'ae-ho). But since its director Paek Ki-wan was taken into custody under martial law, implicated in the illegal assembly at Myong-tong, the institute seems to be sitting on the fence.

All the other organizations affiliated with the National Union have now come to exist in name only.

The 1 March Incident and the Lawyers Group of the Opposition

Outside the orbit of the National Union the lawyers group of the opposition occupies a corner of the opposition. Because of their special profession as lawyers, most of them are people who have acted as defense counsel for the opposition leaders at their trials. They not only are not lawyers who have been simply involved in some affairs but are people who have connection with the opposition in terms of idea.

Except for a few persons such as Han Sung-hon who was imprisoned himself while defending Kim Chi-ha at his trial and Kan Sin-ok who was taken into custody while defending the case of the Democratic Youth and Students League, they are not direct victims of yusin like many opposition leaders. Viewed from a certain aspect, they were the biggest opposition force.

Because even under yusin these lawyers were comparatively free and their livelihood was not threatened, their support gave no small strength to the helpless opposition leaders at the time. Many among the opposition leaders say that had it not been for the support of their defense lawyer teams, they would have found it difficult to survive.

What is called lawyers of the opposition means all who, sympathetic to the contentions of the opposition, have supported them acting as their defense counsel, and their number should be considerable nationwide. But the popularly known lawyers group of the opposition refers to a group formed centered around the defense team of some 30 lawyers at the trial of the 1 March incident of 1976. Some of the lawyers who were defense counsel for the 1 March case are no longer with us and still others have since taken to a different road, but the defense team for the 1 March case helps one gain an outline of lawyers of the opposition.

They are: Kim Ki-yol (Mokp'o), Kim Ki-ok (Kunsan), Kim Myong-yun (Seoul), Kim Son-t'ae (Seoul, deceased), Kim In-ki (Seoul), Kim Ch'un-pong (Seoul, No Pyong-chun (Seoul), Na Sok-ho (Seoul), Pak Se-kyong (Seoul), Hong Nam-chin (Seoul), Yu T'aek-hyong (Seoul), Yu Hyon-sok (Seoul), Yun Ch'ol-ha (Kwangju), Yi Ki-hong (Seoul), Yi Ton-myong (Seoul, Yi Ton-hui (Seoul), Yi Se-chung (Seoul), Yi T'aek-ton (Seoul; national assemblyman of the New Democratic Party), Cho Chun-hui (Seoul), Chu To-yun (Seoul), Ch'oe Kwang-nyul (Seoul, Ha Kyong-ch'ol (Seoul), Han Pyong-sim (Taegu; national assemblyman of the New Democratic Party), Hwang In-ch'ol (Seoul), Ho Kyu (Seoul), Hong Nam-sun (Kwangju), Hong Song-u (Seoul), Kim Kwang-il (Pusan), and Han Sung-hon (Seoul).

Among them, Pak Se-kyong, Yi Ton-myong, Yi Se-chung, Hong Song-u, Hwang In-ch'ol, Cho Chun-nyol (as given), Ha Kyong-ch'ol, and Yi Tong-hui were defense counsel for the Y.H. case of 1979, and Pak Se-kyong, Yi Ton-myong, and Yi Se-chung were defense counsel for what is popularly known as the Myong-tong illegal assembly case.

In addition, there are a considerable number of lawyers who, though not within the framework of the opposition, may be called pro-opposition. Most of them are characters who defended cases involved with anti-system activities while practicing their legal profession locally. Again, the 35 lawyers affiliated with the Democratic Constitutional Government Tongjihoe are separate from the lawyers of the opposition under review here. Although some of them are interlocked, it is reported that they are of a different root.

There is a group of politicians of the opposition who are not members of the Democratic Constitutional Government Tongjihoe. This group is centered around people such as Chong Il-hyong and Yun Che-sul who have now retired from the political front and is classified as a group as a matter of form but is one that may safely be ignored in terms of its number or activity.

In the opposition prior to 26 October there were quite a number of politicians mingled with others here and there but there were none that could be called a political organization. Even though the Democratic Constitutional Government Tongjihoe was strong in political character, political power was not, and could not be, its struggle goal; so it could be said that all movements targeted on national union assumed the character of a national movement sharing the common goal called human rights and resotration of democracy.

Opposition Political Forces of the pro-Kim Tae-chung Factor

But after 26 October, organizations with a definitive political identity began emerging in the opposition. It goes without saying that the Constitutional Government Tongjihoe is a political organization of the pro-Kim Tae-chung faction, and ex-National Assemblyman Kim Sang-hyon, who was one of its 9-man committee, is now frenziedly forming a political organization under the signboard of ROK Politicocultural Reasearch Institute. This also is a Kim Tae-chung organization. Last February the research institute opened a 4-pyong office on the third floor of Ch'ongja Building at Ch'ongjin-tong, Chongno-ku.

With Kim Sang-hyon, a man of the 19 April generation, as director, and Pak Chong-hun, of the 3 June generation as deputy director, the institute is gathering young political aspirants of the 19 April and 3 June generations. The research institute is holding a Saturday lecture every week as a self-styled "educational arena for training new politicians who will be leading the new times."

The weekly lecture began on 8 March with "ROK Political Development and Political Culture" by Professor Chang Ul-pyong (Songgyungwan University) and so far, eight lectures have been given, the last one being "The future of ROK Consitutional Government" on 26 April by Nam Si-uk, member of the TONGA ILBO editorial committee. The research institute is planning to publish each month's lectures in "a politico-cultural library" form. Its purport is said "to disseminate this library nationwide at a low price and to give education in consciousness to the young people who will be shouldering the new times."

Recently, this research institute has been conducting diverse activities such as taking public opinion polls and disseminating audio tapes of Kim Tae-chung's speeches. At the time when Kim was negotiating in earnest to rejoin the New Democratic Party, this research institute already taking a public opinion poll to determine the feasibility of forming a new party. It was on 7 April that Kim announced he had given up the idea of rejoining the New Democratic Party but by the latter part of March the poll questionnaire had been prepared and by 2-3 April some 30 members were taking the poll nationwide. This poll questionnaire was prepared in such a way as to find out the

comparative popularity and forte and foible of the so-called three Kim's: Kim Chong-p'il, president of the Republican Party; Kim Yong-sam, president of the New Democratic Party; and Kim Tae-chung.

Therefore, to stretch a point, it could be said that this research institute had anticipated Kim's good-bye to the New Democratic Party even before he announced it and that, from still another point, the institute is a force that did not want Kim to rejoin the party, to begin with.

Practically all of the members of this research institute are political aspirants but still they are so young that their names are not exactly household word yet, and they are the kind of people who would find it difficult to get party nominations in elections in the event of merger with the New Democratic Party. It may not be exactly due to such reason alone but the research institute was not enthusiastic about Kim's return to the New Democratic Party from the outset.

It may or may not be on account of this but following Kim's good-bye announcement the research institute is brimming with vitality far more than before. It is this institute that takes charge of all the necessary work before and after Kim Tae-chung makes a move. The institute pre-records Kim's major speeches for nationwide dissemination later and it does not forget to make video tapes of his speeches for future use in case of need. It is also this institute that mobilizes the necessary personnel in many cases.

For the poll taken early in April, the tabulation has been completed but is still classified as restricted. As is the case with almost all polls taken by political organizations in our country, the poll taken by this institute is also reported to show a result very satisfactory to Kim Tae-chung and the institute people.

The nucleus of this institute consists of 30 standing committee members and some 100 general committee members, and it is understood that centered around this, the institute is expanding its organization in width nationwide. Major personnel moving this apparatus are: Kim Sang-hyon, Pak Chong-hun, Kim Ch'ang-hwan, Pak Wang-sik, Yi Ui-kwan, Kim Chung-sok, Kim P'il-ki, Pak Ch'ong-su, Yi Chae-kol, Kim Myong-chung, Yi Kyo-song, Cho Chin-hyok, Kim Ku-ryong, Cho Ki-sang, Kim Tuk-su, Ch'oe Chong't'ae, So Ho-sok, Pak Sang-nae, and Pak Myong-so.

Nearly all of them are unfamiliar names and among them there are those who have had nothing to do with the opposition which has fought under the yusin system. Same as in the case of the Constitutional Government Tongjilhoe, those who have been newly welcomed into existing organizations or opposition organizations that have newly emerged after 26 October are not of the opposition in the strict sense of the word. They are organizations where leaders of the opposition constitute the nucleus and are not organizations consisting of personnel of the

opposition alone. Many are political aspirants who have been locked in on account of this or that connection with leaders of the opposition.

To put it another way, there are cases where people other than "the victims of yusin" have got together under the signboard of the opposition and, in a broader sense, people, if only a very small number of them, whom it is very difficult to put within the framework of the opposition, are among them.

Too, Namhwa Research Institute, also located at Ch'ongjin-tong and operated by ex-National Assemblyman Cho Yon-ha, is an organization of Kim Tae-chung's. It is understood that the institute is mainly taking charge of local organizations. It may or may not have anything to do with the age of Cho who is in his 50's, but members of the institute are older people. The atmosphere of this institute is in striking contrast to the Politicocultural Research Institute with young members full of vitality. It is rumored that in the calm atmosphere this institute is doing some of Kim Tae-chung's important work.

Religious Organizations of the Opposition

In the opposition roughly examined so far there were opposition organizations in the true sense of the word and a group of characters who constituted the nucleus of such organizations. And there are the Politicocultural Research Institute and Namhwa Research Institute which have either emerged newly or strengthened organization after 26 October, as a sort of a task force of Kim Tae-chung's private organizations; the Constitutional Government Tongjihoe, an already existing organization of the opposition which is being reorganized into a pro-Kim Tae-chung organization after 26 October; and still another unit as an organization in direct line of the Kim Tae-chung faction centered around Tonggyo-tong, of which no mention has been made so far. Among the people who have joined the Tonggyo-tong group are Kwon No-kap, Han Hwa-kap, Kim Hyong-kuk, Yi Kil-u, Kim Ok-tu, and Ham Yun-sik, Kim's secretaries who have been serving him as his right-hand men, and reserve Marine Maj Gen Pak Song-ch'ol, ex National Assemblymen Kim Chae-wi and Pak Chong-nyul, and Yi Ki-su, ex-governor of South Kyongsang Province, who have joined as the secretariat was expanded. Completing the lineup of the Kim's direct unit are Yi Hyop, formerly political reporter of the CHUNGANG ILBO, who is in charge of information and Yu Hun-kyn, formerly of the MBC PD who is in charge of protocol and TV. It may be said that this group is an organization of the opposition which is Kim Tae-chung's direct unit and is politically oriented.

In addition, there is another domain of the opposition where those, even though they had nothing direct to do with the opposition, are interlocked on account of the commonness and similarity of the goal they pursued under the yusin system.

Religious groups such as the Catholic Priest Group for Embodiment of Justice, the Catholic Farmers Association, the Urban Industrial Evangelical Association, and the Christian Academy, and the group of students who have returned to school this time are inevitably placed within the same orbit of the opposition.

It could be said that as a matter of fact, it was the religious leaders of the Christian Church who were the main forces behind the religious leaders of the Christian Church who were the main forces behind the anti-system movement in the early days of yusin. It may be that under circumstances that all meetings of a political nature were banned, the church was the only plausible place where people could get together. Even though they had no direct connection with the opposition under review, people like Catholic Bishop Chi Hak-sun were spiritual leaders of the opposition, and the Priest Group for Embodiment of Justice under the bishop's influence was the mainstay of the human rights movement under yusin. Father Ham Se-ung and Father Kim Sung-hun, secretaries of this organization, directly participated in the National Union, and also laundhing the human rights movement with firm convictions were (?Father Yang Hong), Father Mun Chong-hyon (Chonju), and Father Sin Hyon-pong (Wonju).

Those leading the Urban Industrial Evangelical Association which made its name widely known by the Y.H. case, are protestant ministers Cho Sung-hyok (representative of the ROK Center for Studies of Industrial Problems), Cho Hwa-sun (Inch'on), An Kyong-su (Kyongsu), Chong Chin-tong (Ch'ongju), and Cho Chi-song (Yongdungp'o).

The Catholic Farmers Association headquartered in Taejon has 10 united provincial chapters in all provinces except for Seoul, Pusan and Cheju Province. Under its Taejon headquarters the Farmers Association has united provincial chapters, local chapters on a county-myon basis, and subchapters on a village-unit basis. Although the association has not made the number of its members public, it is easy to see that its number must be considerable, judging from the size and fervor of the "National Farmers Meeting for a Democratic Farm Policy" held by the association in Taejon on 11 April. Some 700 representatives of united provincial chapters attended the meeting.

The reason for the existence of the Farmers Association is: "Let us realize Christian love and justice in the rural society" and "No social salvation, no individual salvation." Although the Catholic Church is subsidizing part of the movement fund in the name of helping the evangelization of the rural villages, as a social movement of the Catholic Church, it does not mean that its members are all Catholics.

There is no one who can handily explain what relationship the Farmers Association has with the opposition, particularly Kim Tae-chung. Even though, over and above the fact that Kim is a Catholic and that there

is an aspect where Kim's popular economic idea and that of the Farmer's Association are in accord, there is no explicit reason on the surface for a close bond between the two, nevertheless it appears that close relationship is understood to exist in actuality between the two.

The Christian Academy being led by pastor Kang Won-nyong keeps some distance from the opposition. But because of the similarity of the goal pursued, it will do no harm to place the academy in the orbit of the opposition.

As to journalists, both Ch'on Kwan-u, formerly TONGA ILBO editor, and Song Kon-ho, formerly its editor in chief, certainly share the same idea with the opposition but they do not have direct connections with the National Union or other organizations of the opposition. Professor Yi Yong-hui of Hanyang University also belongs in this category. Professor Paek Nak-sh'on of Seoul University, even though he frequently made assertions as an opposition leader and took the lead in the anti-system movement, nevertheless complains that his name was put on the list of the National Union Central Committee against his will.

The Opposition and the Feasibility of an Ideological Political Party

Now, the remaining question is: Will the opposition forces be turned into a political force? To put it another way: Will a new party of the opposition really emerge?

Mr H, who is known to be close to Kim Tae-chung and deeply involved with this question, confidently answers: "It will surely emerge" and "the only question remaining is when?" Kim Tae-chung himself made it clear at a Kwanhun Club seminar on 25 April, saying "I do not deny the feasibility of a new party."

Anyhow, at this juncture the emergence of an opposition party centered around Kim Tae-chung is taken for granted as a fait accompli. Of course, it is not that there is no possibility at all for Kim's grafting on to the New Democratic Party and that the non-tangkkwonp'a within the New Democratic Party, which is a force supporting Kim Tae-chung, will not again push for welcoming back Kim Tae-chung, but the present atmosphere is firming up toward the formation of a new party.

At this point in time it also can be said that an event likely to cause the opposition being led by Kim and Kim Yong-sam's New Democratic Party to join hands will happen when the content of the constitution amendment takes a direction diametrically opposed to their expectations or when it becomes certain that the political ruling power will pass to a force completely different from the so-called three Kim's.

The opposition forces essentially assumed the nature of a national movement or a social movement for the restoration of human rights and democracy but among them there were a considerable number of politicians and of those with strong political will even though they were not politicians. To them, what is needed is a political arena where they could unfold their will, if not directly on the political.

Again, the opposition is essentially different from the New Democratic Party in terms of physical constitution. They are radicals committed to realizing the humanist ideal: "We stand on the side of the poor." For them to become bedfellows with the New Democratic Party, a dyed-in-the-wool conservative party, is a very difficult thing to do. That is why they opposed to Kim Tae-chung's return to the New Democratic Party from the outset.

They had believed "a new era must be centered on a new type of people." (National Assemblyman Ye Ch'un-ho) They think that a conservative party, be it the New Democratic Party or the Republic Party, will be unable to solve basic, intrinsic problems our country will be facing in the 80's, i.e., distribution of wealth, labor problems, and rural problems. So they argue that the emergence of a new ideological political party is inevitable.

Nonetheless, why they had to remain silent when Kim was negotiating his return to the New Democratic Party was because public pressure for a union of the opposition and Kim's lingering attachment to the New Democratic Party were too strong.

The FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW of Hongkong wrote in its 22 February issue that Kim Tae-chung holds an ideology left of center, but in fact, Kim is closer to conservatism. Accomplished politicians such as Kim, Kim Sang-Hyon, and Cho Yon-ha are people capable of co-existing with the New Democratic Party even if they returned to it. But no so with non-politicians of the opposition in the pure sense of the word.

So goes the general view that in the event of Kim's return to the New Democratic Party, the groups which would follow him will be very narrow in scope, such groups being limited to the Constitutional Government Tongjihoe, the Politicocultural Research Institute, Kim's direct units, and some of the lawyers of the opposition. But there are many people whose view is that on account of the Kim's so-called "7 April declaration" of good-bye to the New Democratic Party, the number of people of the opposition who would come out onto the political front will be 3-4 times the number of those who would follow Kim in the event of his return to the New Democratic Party.

Kim's 7 April declaration also has enhanced the feasibility of emergence of an ideological political party in our country. When Kim engages in politics with the opposition as the base, there is a strong probability that the new party will be closer to an ideological party. The opposition

forces mobilized on the political front will be greatly breathing life into the new party, but if the new party is not an ideological party which has something different from the existing conservative parties to offer, then Kim's new party will be unable to escape the criticism of being an opposition party engaged in factional operations of the opposition to make him a presidential candidate.

But the question is: How well will a new ideological political party accept the allergic reaction of refusal of the people in general against an ideological political party? In connection with this question, the agony of those leaders known to be participating in the work of forming a new party is highly visible.

It would appear that even as they feel a strong urge for an ideological political party, many opposition leaders also are clearly aware of the limits of an ideological political party. Even as they are aware that our political climate has not yet matured to the extent of reasonably accepting a strong ideological political party, they feel the agony that they cannot come up with yet another conservative political party either.

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SITES OF NATIONWIDE LABOR-MANAGEMENT DISPUTES

Seoul SINDONGA in Korean Jun 50 pp 162-188

[Article by Cho Song-chun, research fellow of the ROK Center for Study of Labor Problems]

[Text] Torrentially running is the stream of history, a stream from which there is no escape, a stream that cannot be covered up, no matter what. Precisely such is the problem of the workers which has rapidly grown in magnitude in the shadow of society for the past 20 years or so. During the past 4 months alone, a nationwide total of 809 labor-management dispute cases broke out, an explosion unmatched in history. Low wages and long work hours, bad labor environments and industrial accidents and occupational diseases, unreasonable dismissals and reduction in force, delay in payroll payment and all kinds of illegal acts--the cumulative effect of all these finally came to a head.

Now, then, let us try to grasp, in the stream of a few cases mentioned below, what is the actual state of labor-management disputes that broke out recently and where their causes lie.

The Sabuk Case, an Outcry of Life in the Pits

"This sort of thing has had to happen once."

"This situation was preventable. But it happened because they too much repressed us workers one-sidedly. There was nothing wrong on our part."

"They must listen to the contentions of the workers for their right to living."

"We have nothing to regret that the surgery that had to be done sooner or later was done by our own hands."

These are the words of an outcry of the miners of Sabuk Mine of the Tongwon coalfield who relentlessly demanded their right to living that had been deprived of them, completely occupying Sabuk-up for 4

consecutive days from 21 to 24 April and clashing with the police behind the barricades they had erected on the major highways.

The Sabuk case is generally understood to be an incident that was caused by wage-increase demand, distrust against the labor union, and excessive police intervention, but if one delved deeper into the case, one could say that this was an unavoidable corollary of the struggle for survival by the workers who had been neglected in terms of structure in the course of pursuing of the economic development policy in our country.

The life of the miners which begins and ends with heavy mining labor without any hope for promotion or hobong [annual seniority pay] amid the stifling 30-40 degree heat of the earth in pits several hundred meters underground which threaten to collapse at any moment--this, in a word, is no better than "the life of a mole."

For the miners, there is neither hobong nor promotion. They start as a poor miner and end as a poor miner. According to data released by the Mining Workers Union last year, the minimum cost of living for a family of five was 241,210 won. As against this, the current average wage of the mining workers is 155,738 won, which means they are short of some 90,000 won for maintaining a minimum level of living. In the case of Yi Chae-sik, a mining worker with 8 years' service, his pay as of January 1980 was 141,782 won out of which his take-home pay was a mere 64,321 won. The breakdown follows:

		<u>Withheld</u>	
Employee job number (8 yrs)	2548	Savings assessment	1,730
Name: Yi Chae-sik		Union dues	2,126
Work days	23	Additional savings assessment	15,000
Regular pay	5,225	Medical insurance	2,430
Base pay	80,128	Village credit union	11,800
Pit allowance	40,064	(Monthly capital share payment)	1,000
(Night differential)	3	Rice	37,920
(Weekly rest day allowance)	1	Briquet	3,000
Subtotal:	20,900	Welfare assessment	1,755
Tool allowance	690	Life insurance	700
Total earnings	141,782	Total withheld	77,461
		Take-home pay	64,321

Such complicated wage system is one that has been continuing since the Japanese imperialist days without any major change and, as seen in the inclusion of regular pay and base pay in the itemization of earnings, the system operates as a negative factor that makes the miners accept their pay as given without understanding the content.

But what is most crucial to the miners in their pay is the magic of the contract wage system and the komsu [timekeeper] system.

For the sake of argument, say there was a wage increase. What happens is, the monthly pay appears to have increased by so many percent nominally but actually there are cases where the pay shrinks. This happens because komsu, who are clerical workers commonly called by the miners "amhaeng osa" [an undercover emissary of the king of the Yi Dynasty sent to check up on a local governor], falsify time cards under orders of the management with the result that miners' pay reverts to their former pay scale 2-3 months after the wage increase. For example, the komsu is supposed to grade work performed from A to D for the amount of coal mined, the length of tunnel excavated, and the number of props set up, but the komsu grades them all C and D.

In other words, no matter how much increase there has been in wage, juggling by komsu of various allowances dependent on the grades of work performed brings the earnings of the miners right back to the lowest pay on the pay scale, to suit the gross payroll predetermined by the management regardless of the wage increase. One young miner, commenting on such bottom pay and the komsu system, self-effacingly says: "If life was to be graded, the miners would be the 100th on the grading scale of 100."

An important thing indispensable in the contract wage system would be the installation of the latest technological provisions and the improvement of working conditions aimed at increasing work efficiency. Nevertheless, even as the mining goes deeper underground every day, pick and shovel still remain the major tools. A Mr Pak, a 20-year veteran miner, smiled thinly, saying "I started out with my pick and shovel and they are still my major tools"

The coal seam in our country is very crooked and as it goes deeper underground, sometimes it reaches as far as underneath the seabed. Now, the miners who usually work 400 to 1,000 meters underground, run into a stifling 30-40 degree heat of the earth and the coal carts are immersed in the ankle-deep water up to the wheels, causing great obstruction in work efficiency. Nowhere is to be found a place where they can catch their breath and sit down for a short break. For a break, they either lean against the wall or sit down right where they are working. Their workplace is where they eat their lunch and squeeze out their clothes, the upper part soaked in sweat and the lower part in water, several times a day.

In a word, be it the equipment or the working conditions, nothing has significantly changed from 20 years ago.

Although the Labor Standard Law provides that the mining workers are entitled to the standard pay for 6-hour work day, this still remains a mere dream for them. Under the contract wage system, out of their desire to earn one more penny, all miners have to work in excess of 8 hours a day; and to fulfill the quota set by the management, they are compelled to work much too long hours.

Ten Percent of All Miners Suffer from Anthracosilicosis

Mining accidents are usually classified into three categories of cave-in, flooding, and fire. According to government statistics, such accidents occurred at some 200 coal mines nationwide last year in which 221 miners died, 5,149 miners suffered major and minor injuries. For every 1 million tons of coal mined, the death rate of miners is 0.4 miners in Britain, 0.6 in West Germany, and 1.4 in Japan, but in our country, it is an astounding 12.2 miners.

During the last year alone, the pit fire at Unsong Coal Mine at the end of October killed 44 miners and seriously injured several score others. This year, already during the first quarter 47 miners died on account of mining accidents, and with such mining accidents increasing every day as mining goes deeper underground, yearly death toll tends to exceed 200.

For reference, let us take a look at the trend of death toll caused by industrial accidents since 1975.

	<u>Death</u>	<u>Injury</u>
1975	270	
1976	240	
1977	219	
1978	195	Over 5,300
1979	247	Over 5,800

Source: KWANGSAN NOBO February 1980 issue

No less threatening the miners than safety-related accidents is occupational disease known as anthracosilicosis. The dust and gas masks the miners use are usually more than 10 years old and cannot protect them from coal and rock dust.

According to a survey conducted last year by the Mining Workers Union, 10 percent of all miners showed up as victims of anthracosilicosis, the rate of incidence increasing 3.5 percent every year.

Anthracosilicosis strikes veteran miners of 5 or more years, but there have been numerous cases wherein the management, even after diagnosing the incipient symptoms, did not let the patients know of it, and continuing to work them until they were too sick to work, discharged them by ingenious means.

Consequently, among those miners discharged on account of occupational diseases there are practically none with "incipient" symptoms and most of them are victims of "advanced anthracosilicosis."

What is more, the miners are groaning under double and triple burden such as the practically nonexistent welfare facilities, the industrial accident compensation system without substance, and high prices peculiar to the mines. When a miner buys goods at the so-called cooperative store, management deducts the price from the buyer's wage of the month but management pays the store with a 4-month draft. So the store adds 4-month interest to the price and management doubly exploits the miners. The miners live from day to day without any hope for hospitalization or education of their children. Such is the life in the mining village.

A Coal-Mining Village, a Powder Keg

Such plight of the coal-mining workers is not something that was created yesterday or today. We could find part of the cause in that more recently in 1966 the government, by unreasonably pursuing the oil-first, coal-second guideline under its fuel modernization policy, caused a decrease in coal production and sales slump, shutdown of coal mines and reduction in force, and delay in payroll payment, leading the coal industry to bankruptcy and the already suffering miners into an even more difficult situation. Even at that time from the end of 1967 to early 1968 they demanded the promotion of the coal industry and the improvement of treatment of the miners. Carrying petroleum cans on their backs and burning effigies, they mounted street demonstrations and sit-in resistance throughout the country under the slogan "We oppose changeover to oil to the death."

Now, the opinion of experts holds that under conditions that the overseas energy resources are as unstable as today, it is imperative to basically reconsider the low-coal-price policy which stunts the tapping and utilization of domestic coal resources and that even if the consumer price is kept at the present level, if the 21 million won or so earmarked for this year's import of 4.5 million tons of foreign coal is diverted to the promotion of domestic coal production, then it will be possible to raise the per-ton [producer] price by 85 percent, thus making it possible to improve and stabilize the standard of living for the miners, let alone the promotion of the coal industry.

Another important fact that cannot be overlooked is the existence of the National Defense Law. This law throughout the 1970's under the slogan for high growth insured the one-sided superiority of management while decisively restricting the basic labor rights and blocking the vitalization of labor unions.

To put it another way, the National Defense Law has operated as a big restrictive factor behind the reasons why the labor unions fell into an existence in name only, unable to champion the rights and interests of the workers.

The recent riot of the miners of Tongwon coalfield, Sabuk-up, was a case that could be described as inevitable from one aspect, one that had to explode sometime somewhere under the conditions that had been building up in the past. The responsibility for it, it should be viewed, rests not with some 20 miners whom the police are pursuing at present but rather with this society as a whole, including the government authorities, management, labor union, miners, and the police.

What one feels first from this Sabuk situation is the indissolvable distrust, nay, grievances beyond distrust, between Director Yi Chae-ki of the labor union local and the miners.

As shown by such sayings that the position of the director of the labor union local which is "better than that of the magistrate of a county" is held by "a scoundrel, once put behind bars on charges of embezzlement, who has come back as the director of the union local"; "a lot of interests are involved"; "union cadres who reign over the miners," the union cadres including the director of the union local, have been pocketing enormous amounts of money in collusion with the suppliers of rice, boots, etc. which the miners normally buy in quantities.

Graphically testifying to this is also the fact that come an election time, such improper techniques as bribery, kidnaping and wining and dining are frenziedly used and that the saying that once a director of the union local, it is no problem to buy a house in Seoul.

Amid such intense distrust and dissatisfaction against the labor union, during the last wage-increase struggle the director of the union local as a matter of course should have joined forces with the union headquarters to attain the 42.67 percent wage increase but because the director of the union local entered into a tacit agreement with the management for a 20 percent increase, which was less than 50 percent of the goal, the dissatisfaction of the miners at last exploded and police intervention to protect the director of the union local was tantamount to setting fire to the powder keg.

The Mining Workers Union demand for a 44.67 percent wage increase, when viewed from the miners' labor intensity and the high prices prevailing

in the mining area, was in fact a minimum demand necessary for maintaining the minimum level of living for the miners. Most of the miners still believe that if Yi Chae-ki, director of the union local, had not conspired with the management, they would have been able to get a wage increase of 30 percent or more at the least.

It cannot but be regrettable that the government authorities and the police should have interfered and meddled with the labor union activities. If, from the very outset, as the police themselves admit now, they had tried to have the problem solved peacefully by talks, instead of going out of their way to protect the director of the union local, a scandal of this magnitude could have been prevented and the problem solved in a democratic manner, if with some pains among the people concerned. But the police have not only committed the decisive stupidity of handling the protesting miners with heavy hands in the same old manner but beat up several miners, inflicting major and minor injuries on them.

Be it the act of having tried to unconditionally put down the angry miners out of hand, mobilizing a task force, or the fact that this resulted in the death of a policeman and in major and minor injuries inflicted on other policemen was not the posture of "resolving by talks" the situation, as the Sabuk Police Substation chief says.

The excessive police meddling in the end not only caused the raging riot of the entire miners but also made the miners' wives appeal through broadcast "The police have killed our husbands who have been living in the pits. How could we idly stand by? Let us all go out to fight," and take the lead in the protest demonstration, carrying briquet tongs.

Of course in the clash of both sides there were some radicality and unfortunate things such as death and injury and the kidnaping of the wife of the director of the union local, but it must be said very praiseworthy of them that they should have guarded the armory and powder depot abandoned by the police, preserved the T'aeguk flag, endeavored to maintain a self-governed order, or for an early restoration of the situation, they should have yielded most of the important items of their demands presented on the 23rd, broken up their sit-in, removed the barricades, and begun cleaning up the streets.

The Kink That Still Remains

Anyhow, the miners unanimously view as the direct cause of the situation "a simple labor-management struggle that has undergone diffusion." Miner Chin Ok-kyu says: "Responsibility for such expansion of the case entirely rests with the management and the police. There have been no impure elements involved with the case. Some 4,000 miners have unanimously risen to seek their right to living and there have been no leaders."

In the wee hours of 24 April, with agreement dramatically reached on an 11-point demand, the situation somewhat settled down, but the 2

most important points of the miners' demand, i.e., wage increase and amnesty, are still smoldering. The 11 points are:

Notice to the employees of the mine:

1. Director Yi Chae-ki of the labor union local has already resigned.
2. Management assumes full responsibility for the medical care and compensation of the injured.
3. Management assumes the full cost for the rehabilitation of damaged housing as well.
4. Maximum efforts also will be made for an increase in the wages of subcontractor employees.
5. In the operation of the credit union, too, management pays the subsidy to make up for insufficient funds.
6. Management will pay forthwith the total amount taken out of the 1979 bonus as a measure of reprimand.
7. Efforts will be made to pay no-work allowance for the 4 days of no work on account of the case.
8. An upward adjustment will be made of the bonus from the present 250 percent to 400 percent.
9. The recent 20 percent wage increase will be applied retroactive from January to May, and will be readjusted when the coal price is increased.
10. The police will not use force in tidying up the situation.
11. Management and the authorities will make maximum efforts to satisfactorily solve the questions related to the case.

"There Have Been No Leaders"

Some miners, dissatisfied with the items of agreement, refuse cooperation of any kind, contending that "We have gained nothing except for the bonus increased from 200 [as given] percent to 400 percent," and have come out to argue that "Unless the wage system, too, is replaced by a fixed pay system, not a contract wage system, we have gained nothing substantial."

On the other hand, that the Kangwon Province police have embarked on searching for some 20 miners who are suspected as leaders of the case, it is feared, may pour cold water on the spirit of reconciliation the miners have displayed for tidying up the situation. What is more, amid an atmosphere wherein toktae [miners who rent part of a mine to work]

under their jurisdiction and at coal mines such as Hwasun Coal Mine where the working conditions are much worse, strikes are breaking out one after another, the miners of Tongwon coalfield are strongly demanding that there should be amnesty, no criminal punishment. So there is ground that vigorous resistance may break out once again at any time, depending on how the police search result turns out. Almost all the miners say: "Whichever miner he may be, if they arrest and punish him, then it is regarding the miners too lightly, a thing that absolutely could not be."

The Sabuk case, from one aspect, is one that has relaxed, if partially, for the first time in a long time, the kink of the miners in their pit life.

But such conditions do not apply to the miners alone. On account of the physiology of our country's economy, similar conditions exist in too many other areas. Their demands and outcries should not be interpreted or taken advantage of as expediency of the times' dictates. This is not something that is confined to an organizational dispute, to a wage increase question; nor is this, above all, a reckless act on the part of certain ringleaders.

Their earnest inner outcry is a graphic reflection of the cause and character of the case, which are:

1. Our fight absolutely is not an organizational fight. Were it an organizational fight, there would have been a scene of violence and confusion among the union members. Ours was not a fight among union members. We only fought, demanding our right to living and enumerating our bottlenecks, against the kept director of the union local pocketing the union dues and against the forces protecting and supporting him.
2. Correctly understand our outcry for right to living! Look our miserable life in the eye and strive to basically improve it!
3. It was our purpose to elect a director of the union local we want and feed our children so that we might live well all together, so there have been no leaders. There absolutely should never be any kind of punishment.

Among the wives of miners of Sabuk mine of Tongwon coalfield who, wielding pokers, mounted a sit-in demonstration night and day together with their miner husbands, was Mrs Kim Sang-nim, 30. Worrying that a wrong impression may be created "by this case that the miners are dangerous characters prone to riot" and insisting that the miners are good people even though they are doing the menial work of mining coal, she said:

"Because the miners are good people, they have long put up with a repressed life. But there is a limit to perseverance like everything else. Their long pent-up anger at last exploded into the disturbance.

Now that this has happened, I believe it will be well for the management which has been insisting on its own interests alone and the labor union cadres who have been neglecting the miners, to do some deep soul-searching. Outside, the people are exuberant that a new springtime has arrived for politics but in the pits several hundred meters underground the heartrending reality still continues. It is only our simple wish that we would not have to walk the dangerous mountain path to fetch a pail of water, that the prices which are 2-3 times higher than in the urban areas would be firmly held down, and that there would be no more terrifying accidents in the pits."

Pay Us Minimum Wages!

It is the wage problem that accounts for most of the labor-management disputes. For last year alone, 70 percent of the labor-management disputes had to do with wages. As for the rest, items dealing with matters of safety and health such as industrial accidents and occupational diseases accounted for approximately 9.5 percent, and matters dealing with accident compensation, labor agreement, and work hours about 3-4 percent. It cannot but be said that this is an inevitable corollary of the labor-management relationship formed by wage and that the overwhelming percentage of the wage question over all other working conditions proves that the wages of workers in our country are still on a low level.

With regard to the wage question, the labor union side states: "We are demanding a minimum living wage, the very rock-bottom wage, absolutely not with an eye to management profits but for sustaining ourselves and our dependents."

Presenting the management analysis data compiled by the Bank of Korea and the financial analysis data by the Industrial Bank, the labor union side also contends: "The net profit, total capital, and payroll ability of the manufacturing business all show the trend of significant increases year after year and when the so-called inflation-related profits are taken into account, what they call slump is no more than out-and-out exaggeration."

The "Labor Productivity and the Trends of Wage and Price" released by the Korea Productivity Center bears out this contention of the labor union side. The data released by the Productivity Center show that the rate of increase in real wages up to last September was 10.5 percent and the rate of increase in labor productivity 16.2 percent, an increase of 5.7 percent more than the real wage increase. In particular, for the first 3 quarters of last year the rate of increase in real wages in the mining industry was 6.7 percent while labor productivity rose 16.6 percent, thus registering a big difference of 9.9 percent.

But in spite of the fact that the rate of increase in labor productivity was continually greater than that in real wages in the 1970's except

for the first few years, management paid no attention to improving the position of the workers either by giving priority to strengthening their international competitive edge or on the excuse of slump, and has been making money under the protection of the authorities in terms of system, in terms of policy. This is the contention of the labor union side.

One worker protests: "We have persevered with streaming sweat because they asked us to wait a little longer as in the 1980's we would be doing a \$10-billion export with a [per capita] income in excess of \$1,000 and our country too would become a welfare society on the level of advanced countries. Now that the export has reached \$15 billion with a [per capita] income of \$1,500, I don't know what good it does for me." He goes on to ask a question in return: "Mr President of the company lives high in a posh residence, even sending his children abroad to study but we, unable to get out of this rented room battling soaring prices, send our children into the labor market because we cannot afford to send them to high school, let alone college. Is this the 1980's we have so anxiously waited with blood and sweat?"

It is reported that women workers at a certain raw silk company, who suffer from heat rash and athlete's foot every summer, submitted a request to the management for the installation of 20 million won worth of air conditioning facilities only to get it ignored, but that 2 months later the company president bought a high-class foreign car worth 40 million won.

On account of the fact that the authorities have been handling the labor movement aimed at protecting and improving the interests of the working class, not as a social problem but as a criminal problem, protecting and conspiring with management as a matter of policy, the lid has long been clamped down hard on the actual state of labor problems. The Y.H. case and the Tongwon coalfield case are, as a matter of fact, no more than the tip of an iceberg. The Tongil Textile case, too, which shook the world, became known domestically only today, some 2 years later, but a move is seen afoot to solve the problem if belatedly and passively.

Under such conditions labor-management disputes have long been pregnant with intrinsic potentials for explosion. The Puma [Pusan and Masan] cases in which the workers, students, and citizens jointly demonstrated and the Sabuk case in which the workers and their families, joining forces, mounted drastic demonstrations, show a cross section of the problem.

Now, let us take a brief look at the wage increase struggle of the workers that has occurred this year.

Sit-In Struggle Everywhere

--At the Inch'on Iron and Steel Co, Ltd (at Songhyon-tong, Inch'on city; representative, Yi Myong-pak) of the Hyundai Group, some 700 employees

staged a sit-in, refusing to work as of 1200 hours on 25 April and presenting an 8-point demand such as "work out and implement a real base pay system," "pay bonus by the quarter based on average wage," "Managing Director Pak Kyong-chin, give up exploiting workers' wages and step down forthwith," and "implement forthwith a periodic pay-raise system."

At first, 150 union members staged a sit-in demonstration wearing headbands inscribed with the word "Unite!" but subsequently under the command of the labor union executive department the entire union members joined it and some 30 union cadres among them occupied the office of Managing Director Pak Kyong-chin for an all-night sit-in. They contended that the management was claiming to have made a wage increase, merely adding various kinds of allowances to the base pay set very low. The union members criticized that although they demanded the payment of annual allowance, the operation of commuter buses, and the upward adjustment of the wages of those whose wage increase was less than 15 percent, the management was not sincerely trying to meet the demands. On the second day of sit-in they clashed with the management, beat up Yi Yong-nam, 42, director in charge of general affairs, and his chauffeur, burned the company passenger car, and set fire to the company's executive dining room.

Again, criticizing that "In spite of the provisions in the collective bargaining agreement for periodic wage increases, the company is not implementing them" the union members denounced the unlawful, improper act on the part of the company. Although the union members, ending their sit-in as of 1 May, returned to work, they have not reached any definite agreement on their demands and 20 workers are under investigation by the police on suspicion of being the ringleaders of the sit-in, violence and arson.

--At Tongyang Kigye [Oriental Machinery] (Yangp'yong-tong, Yongdungp'o-ku; representative, Han Ch'ang-kun) some 600 workers began on 28 April a sit-in for an indefinite period, demanding that their average salary of 60,000 won be increased by 40 percent, that the bonus be raised to 400 percent (the previous year, 200 percent), etc. but the dispute was settled on 1 May with agreement reached on a 25 percent wage increase and a 400 percent bonus.

--At Sinsin Lumber Mill located at Songnim-tong, Inch'on city, some 350 workers refused to work and began sit-in on the afternoon of 23 April, demanding a 39 percent wage increase and free lunch but on the following day, the management responded with a 24 percent wage increase and free lunch, which the workers accepted, and both sides agreed, in addition, to seek a way of settlement by means of talks for any future labor-management dispute.

--The Chemical Workers Union local for Samsung Pharmaceutical Company (director of the local, Kim Yong-sun) began a sit-in for 5 consecutive

days from 27 March, refusing to eat lunch and to leave their workplace, at the end of which a labor-management agreement was reached that the women workers' starting pay of 51,000 won be raised by 40 percent to 71,500 won (daily pay, 2,383 won) and that the temporary allowance (bonus) be raised from 300 percent to 380 percent.

--The Koryo Leather Ind Co, Ltd (representative, Kim U-chung) was originally scheduled to raise wage during February, but the management presented a counterproposal for a 13 percent increase. A labor-management negotiation was held on 26 March on demand as made by the union local (director of the local, Nam Sang-hon) in accordance with its joint resolution with the Leather Subcommittee of the Chemical Workers Union passed at an interim meeting of union local delegates that the wage be increased by 88.2 percent and the temporary bonus to 611 percent respectively.

The management side introduced afresh a 15 percent increase proposal, then a 20 percent increase proposal. Director Nam of the union local and 270 union members of the Yongdungp'o factory (which includes Yongin factory) began a sit-in on 27 March, refusing to eat lunch and to leave their workplace. Thereupon, the management side presented a 22 percent increase proposal. On 30 March the union cadres went to the home of President Kim U-chung and lodged their protest but did not get any response. On 1 April, all of 270 union members of the Yongdungp'o factory locked themselves in the company warehouse for a sit-in. Dismayed, the management reopened negotiations and it took until 2200 hours that evening before a labor-management agreement was reached that the wage be increased by 72 percent and that the management assume the monthly meal cost of 2,000 won.

A Monthly Income of 50,000 Won for 4-Year Experience

--Kukje Pharma Ind Co, Ltd settled the wage dispute just before the staging of a sit-in by agreeing to raise the starting daily pay of women workers by 35 percent from 1,800 won to 2,450 won.

--Sam Yung Chemical Co, Ltd, proposing a 20 percent wage increase on 23 April, was sticking to it, but 5 hours after some 500 workers staged a sit-in, refusing to work as of 1200 hours, a labor-management agreement was reached for a 25 percent increase and the workers broke up the sit-in.

--At Kukche Cheji [international paper manufacturing company], too, as on 7 April 280 union members demanded a wage increase and threatened to stage a sit-in, refusing to leave their workplace at end of shift, the management settled the demand on the same day by agreeing to a 25 percent wage increase.

--At T'aehung Sanop, as the management proposed a 13 percent wage increase, 120 workers of the outgoing shift on 22 April, gathered on the company playground to protest and went on to occupy the company

office for a sit-in, and a labor-management agreement was reached at 1030 hours on 24 April for a 28.83 percent wage increase.

--Hyosung Glass of the Jinro group, although the labor union side requested labor-management negotiations for a wage increase, angered the union members by making insincere responses such as "There is no plan at present for a wage increase" or "Let's meet in May." Only after the union members staged a sit-in at 1500 hours on 25 April did the management come forward with a 25 percent wage increase proposal. Very much angry at this proposal, the workers occupied the company president's office for another sit-in and a labor-management agreement was reached as the management proposed a 28 percent increase late at night on 26 April.

--At Hanguk (?Yogurt) the workers refused to work overtime on 23 March, demanding increases in wage and temporary allowance (bonus). Although agreement was reached on 29 March for a 25 percent wage increase, settlement of demands for raising the temporary allowance from 400 percent to 500 percent and the upward adjustment of the starting pay is still pending, but it has been agreed to make readjustments comparable to other companies.

--At Namyang Yuop in Ch'onan, the workers resolved at an interim meeting of union local delegates held on 25 April to demand a 30 percent wage increase (management's counterproposal, 27.5 percent) and on 28 April 700 union members refused to leave their workplace at end of shift for a sit-in. At 1900 hours on 29 April an agreement was reached for a 28 percent wage increase and an addition of 80 percent to the temporary allowance.

--At Uil Chemical, the workers staged a sit-in for a wage increase from 1300 hours on 21 April to 1600 hours on 22 April, when an agreement was reached for a 30 percent increase, and they broke up the sit-in.

--At the Union Magnetic, a company manufacturing audio tapes (at Yangp'yong-tong, Yongdungp'o-ku; representative, Yi Chong-t'ae), as their wage increase negotiations with the management broke down (management proposed a 20 percent increase) some 200 union workers began a sit-in in the locker room on 18 April, demanding a 40 percent wage increase and an additional 100 percent temporary allowance. From 19 April they began a marathon negotiation session in the company president's office but on 21 April, while pretending to be asleep, the company president managed to slip away. This angered the union members and caused labor-management clashes in which 4-5 people were injured and the director of the union local had to be hospitalized. On 22 April a labor-management agreement was reached that the wage be increased by 27 percent, an additional 50 percent be added to the temporary allowance, and the company president make a public apology.

--At Taehan Kwanghak [Korean optical], a tenant company in the Kuro Industrial Estate (representative, Kim Pyong-ch'ol), some 500 employees staged a sit-in as of 1400 hours on 25 April, demanding a 30 percent wage increase and a 400 percent annual bonus. The employees, contending "The management last February raised the wages of the employees by an average of 5-15 percent but the monthly income for an employee of 4-year experience was barely on the 50,000-won level, way below the cost of living," claimed that "Up to now we have never once received a bonus."

--Some 300 union members of the National Fiber Workers Union local (director of the local, Cho Yong-won) for Tong Yang Nylon, a tenant company in the Ulsan Industrial Estate, staged a sit-in as of the afternoon of 24 April, demanding minimum living wages but broke up the sit-in and in its place, the director of the union local and 31 members of its Standing Executive Committee continued the sit-in in the union local office. Contending that the average wages of the productive workers, i.e., 67,000 won for women workers and 127,000 won for men workers, were not enough to sustain themselves, they demanded 90,213 won (33 percent increase) for women workers and up to 167,365 won (30.3 percent increase) for men workers, the minimum cost of living for a family of three. As a result, an agreement was reached on 28 April for an average increase of 28.2 percent.

--Kwangmyong Printing Corporation (Malli-tong, Chung-ku; representative, Yi Hak-su) is one of the leading printing companies in our country with some 1,100 employees and 7.9 billion won sales last year. But the employees are not unionized. As of 1700 hours of 18 April, some 200 employees gathered at the office of the typesetting section on the third floor of the annex building of the company and staged an all-night sit-in, demanding that the current daily pay of 3,800 won be raised to 6,000 won and the annual bonus from the current 360 percent to 400 percent, respectively. As against the demand of the printing workers for an average 55 percent increase line, the management counterproposed an average increase of 10-20 percent, citing the slump in the printing business. The negotiations are in a stalemate, both sides still far apart.

The Cases of Masan, Ch'angwon, and the Footwear Business

Most of the enterprises in the Masan Free Trade Zone, citing slump, have limited this year's wage increases to 15 percent more or less, and the workers are opposed to it, contending that "It is not enough to meet the minimum cost of living." Hence the frequent labor-management disputes.

--In the case of Hanguk Songjon, 340 workers demanded a 40 percent wage increase last March and even staged a sit-in, refusing to work, but their demand ended on a 15 percent increase line. Even then the starting daily pay for women workers is a low 1,700 won.

--In the case of the Hanguk Samyang Kongop, too, 140 workers demanded a 40 percent wage increase on the 7th of last month but the management gave only a 15 percent raise. Dissatisfied, the employees submitted resignations en masse and are refusing to work. The management has accepted 35 of the resignations.

--One hundred fifty members of the maritime unit of the Stevedores Union Kusan local (director of the local, Yi Myong-hyon) have been refusing to work since 24 April, demanding increases in stevedoring fees. On the morning of the 24th they gathered at wip'anjang [?on the toside of] of the Kusan Fisheries Association and, presenting to the brokers union of the Kusan Fisheries Association their demands that their stevedoring fees amounting to 73 won [as given] which consist of a landing fee of 62 won per crate of fish, a washing fee of 10 won, and a vinyl packing fee of 5 won, be raised by 40 percent to 108 won, refused to work. Earlier in March they had demanded a 70 percent increase in the stevedoring fees and the brokers union promised a 40 percent raise but the brokers union failed to keep its promise. That is why they took such action in protest. The brokers union, making a new proposal for a 30 percent increase, is negotiating with their representatives.

--At the Ch'angwon Factory of the Hyundai International Inc, some 600 workers staged a sit-in from 0900 hours to 1500 hours on 26 April, presenting their demands to the management that their current wages be raised by 40 percent, a new bonus system be provided, a 300 percent bonus be paid retroactively for last year, and a 500 percent bonus be paid for this year.

--The wage negotiations that had been going on for a month and a half between the labor union and the Big Eight footwear makers in the Pusan area such as the ICC Corporation where some 70,000 workers are employed, were mediated by authority of the Labor Committee. The Labor Committee for the Pusan area for the first time this year on 18 April mediated by authority the rate of wage increase for the 70,000 workers of the Big Eight footwear companies in Pusan city, directing that the wage be increased by 22 percent retroactive to March and a 200 percent annual bonus be paid. The National Chemical Workers Union local for the Big Eight footwear companies had demanded on 4 March that the current average base pay be increased across the board 75.4 percent from 48,516 won to 85,604 won and that the starting daily pay for men workers working standard 8 hours be raised from 1,600 won to 2,876 won and for women workers from 1,280 won to 2,752 won. But the managements, citing financial difficulties in operations, claimed that they could make no more than a 15 percent increase, and the labor union filed a petition for mediation with the Labor Committee on 6 April. The Committee, after going through the pain of postponing the mediation date twice, finally convened the Public Interest Committee on 18 April and made the mediation by authority.

Phantom Labor Unions

One of the major reasons for the intensifying labor-management confrontations lies in the attempts being made by management to block the channel of labor-management talks and arbitrarily deal with labor-management relations. As seen in the case of the Pusan Factory of the Dongkuk Steel Mill Co, Ltd, the management realed up the pathway that was to filter the contentions of the workers by obstructing the formation of a labor union, mobilizing all means and methods. Precisely under such circumstances the Dongkuk Steel Mill case came to break out.

Such example also can be seen in the utterance of the chairman of the S financial clique who, when a labor-management dispute arose in one of his subsidiary enterprises, went so far as to say "Except over my dead body, labor unions absolutely cannot be recognized" and went on to destroy a labor union which had had its application approved, indulging in unlawful acts such as appeasement, threat and bribery.

It is also in that the labor union cadres, who are supposed to maintain relations with the management on an equal footing, representing the rights and interests of the workers, are becoming kept ones or labor aristocrats where the ground for intensifying labor-management confrontations is.

What acted as a direct catalyst in the Tongwon coalfield case is precisely such problem. Health and Social Affairs Minister Chin Ui-chong, the minister in charge of labor-management relations, also lamented the posture of labor union cadres as labor aristocrats: "From the very day they are elected labor union cadres, they change their clothes to high-class western suits and are engrossed only in expanding the power of their own faction, sharing wine cups with government officials and business proprietors while their fellow workers are sweating at their workplace." Moreover, it is said in the case of big enterprises, that "He who falls from the position of the director of a union local finds himself in debt to the tune of tens of millions on won; he who is elected to the position, gets a lucky break all of a sudden."

There are cases in which the management forms a labor union beforehand without the knowledge of the workers, taking undue advantage of the provisions of Section 3, subsection 5 of the Labor Union Law (banning the organization under Section 2) with a view to emasculating the labor union and preventing its formation by the workers themselves. In such cases, the management nominates its intermediate-level cadres as cadres of the union and fills the union membership with its intermediate-level cadres or managerial staff members, thus creating a so-called phantom labor union. The notorious 1978 case of the publishing workers union local for Insonsa (the name since changed to Samgosa) is a typical case caused by a phantom labor union.

--It is the same with the T'aeyang Kumsok [Sun Metal] case. Some 500 workers of T'aeyang Kumsok (representative, Han Un-yong) located at

P'ungnap-tong, Kangdong-ku, Seoul, gathering on the ground floor of a building under construction on the company compound at 0800 hours of 28 April, staged a sit-in demanding a 40 percent wage increase and the normalization of the labor union. The T'aeyang Kumsok labor union is a subunit of the Seoul local (director of the local, Kim Pyong-ho, who is also auditor of the Metal Workers Union) of the National Metal Workers Union, and the position of the director of the subunit until last year was held by the chief of the company's business department O Rak-kyun and is now held by Yi Pong-sun, chief of public relations. The total number of the company employees exceeds 900 but the membership of the labor union is a mere 150 consisting of department and section chiefs, managerial staff members and team captains, and they are performing the role of a watchdog over the workers rather than improving their working conditions.

The subunit of the union local for T'aeyang Kumsok has never held a meeting as a matter of fact, nor has it ever received a membership application nor has it ever hung out its signboard, not to mention the fact that it has never had an office of its own. Claiming that the present subunit director Yi is a "phony subunit director" whom the labor union members have never directly elected, and distributing membership application forms to the entire productive workers for joining "a genuine labor union," the workers demanded the dissolution of the kept labor union and labor union normalization.

Through the intercession of an inspector of the Office of Labor and the director of the Seoul local of the Metal Workers Union, on the night of 29 April at about 2200 hours, the workers held two negotiating sessions with the management and broke up their sit-in, but the management is continuing to improperly lock out scores of workers including Kim Chae-tong.

--Another phantom labor union similar to that of T'aeyang Kumsok is the subunit of the Seoul local of the Metal Workers Union for P'ungsong Chon'gi (Songsu-tong, Songdong-ku). Likewise, P'ungsong Chon'gi workers are not aware of the existence of the labor union nor has the union ever hung out its signboard. Neither has it ever held a meeting. Director of the subunit is an intermediate-level cadre of the company, and the same applies to the union membership as in the case of T'aeyang Kumsok.

The Seoul local of the Metal Workers Union known as a conglomerate of 4-5 such phantom labor unions, has in collusion with managements destroyed the Samwan local (Myonmok-tong, Tongdaemun-ku) organized by the workers on their own in 1978.

"Kept Labor Unions, Get Lost"

As one of the significant phenomena following the Sabuk case, one may cite the growing demands that the cadres of kept labor unions step down and that labor unions be normalized. For example:

--At the Ilwŭn Steel Co. Ltd (representative, Chu Ch'ang-kyun) located at Oryu-tong, Seoul, 600 workers, refusing to work as of 1400 hours of 25 April and gathering at the factory and shouting "Kept director of the union local Yu Kap-sik, step down!" staged a sit-in demanding a 40 percent wage increase and a 400 percent bonus. The union members criticized director Yu of the union local: "With the money he collected from the union members for a housing project for union members, he is creating suspicion by having bought land in the green belt where housing construction is not permitted; in collusion with the management, he limited the wage increase to 15 percent; in the 15 January election for director of the union local, he got himself elected by bringing in 5 ineligible delegates to vote."

--At Tongyang Talc Mine (Chungwon County, North Ch'ungch'ong Province) of Il Shin Ind Co. Ltd, (representative, Yi Sok-hun) the largest talc mine in our country, some 550 workers resolved on 24 April to demand a 50 percent wage increase, a 400 percent bonus, increases in pit and price allowances, rectification of personal discrimination between office workers and productive workers, the dissolution of the kept labor union which is in collusion with the management and to refuse to work until this demand was realized. Dissatisfied with the 26 percent increase agreed upon between the Mining Workers Union local (director of the local, Yi Hyong-sin) for Tongyang Talc and the management on 15 April, they had held the first wage increase rally on the plaza in front of the mine on 23 April and a second rally on the following day, the 24th.

--At Taedong Chemical (Kwangjang-tong, Songdong-ku) 350 workers, refusing to leave at end of shift and gathering at the company dining hall at 1800 hours of 15 April staged an all-night sit-in and demanded the nullification of the labor-management agreement, resignation of the executive department of the kept labor union, and the payment of the unpaid 150 percent bonus. Even as they had not received the 100 percent year-end bonus for last year, 400 workers of Taedong Chemical staged a sit-in on 15 February over nonpayment of the lunar new year's bonus (100 percent) but they were able to get only 50 percent of it paid. So a 150 percent bonus still remained due them.

As the union members, independent of the union executive department, refused to eat lunch on 12 April over the wage increase question, the union executive department, appalled, held a labor-management negotiating session, at which the labor union agreed to an ambiguous 25 percent wage increase proposal from the management (20 percent now and the remaining 5 percent, with business returns after October taken into consideration). This stirred unfavorable reaction among the union members. The Chemical Workers Union, determining that the union local for Taedong Chemical was a trouble-maker local, collected resignations from local's director Kang Sin-kuk and all other officers, on the one hand, and entrusted with collective bargaining right, decided to reverse existing wage increases and start new negotiations for wage increases.

--At Anyang Factory of Gold Star Tele-Electric Co, Ltd (representative, Ku Tu-hoe) some 3,000 workers, gathering on the company playground and auditorium from 1000 hours of 29 April and demanding a 35 percent wage increase and the resignation of the labor union executive department, staged a sit-in. On the afternoon of the 29th the management presented proposals on the question of the labor union executive department and for a 25 percent wage increase, but the union members, demanding a 35 percent increase, continued their sit-in.

--At Wonjin Rayon (Migum-up, Yangju County; representative, Yi Kyu-hak) some 50 workers staged a sit-in from 0800 hours of 28 April, occupying the union office and demanding a 50 percent wage increase, 300 percent bonus, the wholesale resignation of union cadres and the reinstatement of 5 discharged workers.

--In the case of the labor union of Pusan Choson Kongsu (shipbuilding company), at a union meeting last March certain delegates denounced the incompetence of the labor union but it was ignored by the union with 12 years of experience behind it and by the invisible pressure of the management. When the shipbuilding business was booming up to 1979 the director of the union local canceled vacations for all workers but as foreign orders decreased in 1980, he made Saturdays and Sundays days of rest, thus reducing the workers' earning by as much as 30 percent. So the director of the union local has a lot of problems to contend with.

Victory of the Democratic Labor Movement--at Honam Electric

On the other hand, there are cases where union cadres and union members have improved general working conditions in concert, following the normalization of labor unions. One example is the Metal Workers Union local (director of the local, Yi Chong-hui) for Honam Electric located at Usan-tong, Kwangju city, South Cholla Province.

Of course, there had been many twists and turns before the union local for Honam Electric became such a healthy union. For example, in the case of director Yi of the union local, a company employee with 5 years' service, while working as a member of the steering committee of the local, as a delegate, as a member of the labor-management negotiating committee, she had frequently clashed with the management and incurred its hatred. Last November the management finally moved her upstairs to the sales department in Chonju. Thus transferred, she had to commute from a hotel, a tough thing for a single girl to do as people suspiciously stared at her.

Director Yi of the local said "Everything, the company and the labor union, was so wearisome and grievous, so I thought of submitting my resignation but I was dissuaded from doing so by my friends who had been sharing hardships with me and I decided to bide my time until the union was normalized in the interest of all union members." As she was biding her

time, then director of the local resigned about the middle of last January without serving out his term and she was elected as the first woman director of the local by an absolute majority of the women workers. Thus, putting an end to her hotel life and with a sense of victory over the company, with a sense of gratitude to the union members, she returned to Kwangju.

As a new executive department was formed, the union activity became brisk but it was short lived, overshadowed by the dark cloud of unease. There was slump caused by the internal and external oil crunch, to be sure, but what with the emergence of a competitor inevitably followed by the automation of operations and shutdown of certain facilities, the management claimed it had to get rid of the surplus manpower. Thus on 29 February the management discharged 31 workers, and on 8 March, without prior notice, 7 workers were let go. And on 14 March, an incident occurred in which a company cadre beat up union member Chong Song-chu who was protesting against the dismissals.

At the labor-management negotiating session on 18 March, the labor union twice presented a 7-point demand to the management for an 86 percent wage increase, the reinstatement of the unjustly discharged 7 workers, the removal of the company cadre who had beat up the union member, the insuring of labor union activity, etc. but the management rejected it. On 21 March, some 100 union members who had been anxiously awaiting the outcome of the labor-management negotiations, spontaneously staged an all-night sit-in.

Subsequently, as the labor-management relations were near collapse, the workers went on a one-day strike for 22 March, no work for Sunday, 23 March, and although the workers reported for work on 24 March, production output was barely 15-20 percent. Along with the struggle to observe their work hours, the workers during off-duty hours sang workers' songs such as "The Labor Federation Song," "We Shall Overcome," "Justice," and a newly arranged song "The Day the Sun Will Rise with a Bang" and distributed a letter of appeal to all segments of society. The problem developed into a social issue on 26 March.

The Social Evangelical Conference on Kwangju city, holding several discussion sessions on the situation of the union local for Honam Electric, distributed the workers' letter appeal to every organization. The Conference drew up its own statement and resolution and distributed them, on the one hand, and resolved to boycott the Rocket-brand dry batteries and the CHONNAM ILBO (of the Tongil clique) in phased stages. Thereupon, the management sent its vice president to the Social Evangelical Conference to explain the stand of the company, and promised to conscientiously conduct labor-management discussions, asking its good offices in leading the young union members into the right path as it would reinstate the 7 discharged workers.

At the 15th session of labor-management negotiations on 29 March, the management proposed to accept 6 of the demands, provided a 26 percent increase for office workers and a 30 percent increase for factory workers were accepted for a final settlement, but the union rejected it.

On 31 March the management, mobilizing 162 office workers during work hours, held a rally denouncing the labor movement on the one hand and posted on the company bulletin board an announcement regarding the stale-mated negotiation as if a successfully concluded negotiation and distributed beguiling matter. In protest, some 700 union workers proceeded to the new factory building in the rain by the teams and together with the new factory workers, staged a sit-in. In the process, as management staffers tried to prevent the union workers from entering the new factory building by locking up the gate, there was a clash between the union workers and management staffers and some window panes were broken in the ensuing pushing and shoving.

On 1 April, the union workers who had managed to get into the new factory building, staged a sit-in wearing headbands inscribed with the word "Unite!" To the union workers in an overnight sit-in, the Social Evangelical Conference of Kwangju city delivered 120,000 won as wirogum [comfort money] together with some bread and water. On the afternoon of 2 April, representatives of the Metal Workers Union local came to visit to encourage them and, holding a cadres meeting and formulating counter-measures, attended a labor-management negotiating session where the management agreed to accept 6 of the 7 demands, and an agreement was drawn up on them including a 40 percent wage increase. In addition, as it was agreed that the 4-day strike would be considered as regular work time, that any future reduction in force would be dealt with by labor-management consultation, the union workers went home at about 2000 hours.

Subhuman Treatment Scored

Underlying this dispute was the deep-seated dissatisfaction of the workers built up over a long time. One woman worker said with misty eyes:

"What we earnestly demand is that we be able to cast off the starvation wage and be paid a wage that will enable us at least to enjoy the minimum level of living with a smile. But what is most important is that we be able to live in a manner as befits a human being. I believe that this is a right every human being is entitled to demand. But what kind of life do you think we have been leading up to now? For most of a day we spend at our workplace, to what extent do you think we are accorded a human treatment? Just because we have no money, just because we have had no education, just because we have no one to back us up, do you think this is the only way we can live?"

In one of the inducing matter distributed by the union there is the following:

SONGYOK [sacred area]

Full-length Novel

by

YU CHAE-YONG

Published by Hongsongsa

YONGWON HAN CHAYU UI YOKSA

[The Liberal Hour]

by

J. K. Galbraith

Translated by

Han Yong-t'ak

Published by Saemunsa

"Curious about a ruckus being raised in the front gate guardroom, I jumped out to see what was all about it and saw the guard beating up fellow worker Chong Song-chu. The section chief in charge, who was witnessing the beating up, said encouraging the beating up, 'No matter if a scoundrel like him is killed for the survival of the company,' and I had no choice but to give up my effort to break it up as I was too weak to do anything more. The management staffers who had come out to see what was going on, merely stood by as onlookers but I am sure there are many of our union members who are not aware of this even now because they were busy working at their workplace at the time away from the scene. If Chong Song-chu is guilty of anything, he is guilty of having tried to enter the company compound to wage a lawful struggle. What has Chong Song-chu done to ruin the company that he deserved to die as the section chief in charge said?"

The workers are self-deprecatingly resigned to their subhuman treatment because they have no money, no strength, no one to back them up, no education. This woe of theirs they say prevails not only in the company but in society as well. So saying, they point up the question of military service

Under provisions of the law exempting active military service, a graduate of a technical high school with a certificate of qualifications who is employed by a designated key industry company can fulfill his military service obligation by serving as a reserve for 5 years. But facts say otherwise. In the case of the discharged union workers of Honam Electric, even though they were subsequently reinstated, they nevertheless received their draft notice upon their dismissal from the company.

In particular, in our climate where management has the sole right to hire and fire, those exempted from active military service are restricted by that much in the labor movement. It is also true that when a worker wants to seek transfer to another key industry company where the working conditions are better, it is almost impossible to do so on account of exacting procedures that must be followed.

The Trouble That Dongkuk Steel Itself Has Asked For

Unlike the labor-management dispute of the union local with Honam Electric, the labor-management dispute at Dongkuk Steel is one that the management itself has asked for by resorting to every means to obstruct the formation of a labor union. In the case of Dongkuk Steel, the workers tried on several occasions since 1975 to form a labor union only to get frustrated by strong obstruction and pressure of the management coupled with appeasement of the prime mover workers. Thus in the absence of a labor union the workers who had been burdened with hard work with no days of rest throughout the year had no route to talks with the management. Consequently, if a dispute arose, there was no way to break the ice and they had no alternative but to resort to drastic action. The recent case, too, in the final analysis, can be understood only against such background.

Dongkuk Steel Co, Ltd (representative, Chang Sang-t'ae) was established in July 1954. The company has mills in Inch'on and Pusan and has nine affiliate companies including Pusan Chech'ol (Bu San Steel Co, Ltd). On 16 April this year, some 200 workers of its Inch'on factory (Songhyon-tong, Tong-ku, Inch'on city) gathered at the company auditorium and staged a 6-hour sit-in from 0800 hours demanding a 30 percent wage increase, creation of an on-compound mess hall, operation of commuter buses, and elimination of differences in bonus for office workers and factory workers. Thereupon, the management promised to accept the workers' demands, and at about 1400 hours the factory workers broke up their sit-in.

At the company's Pusan factory (Yongho-tong, Pusan city), too, the factory productive workers staged a sit-in from 28 April, presenting a 9-point demand such as termination of obstruction against the formation of a labor union, a wage increase, improvement of working conditions, implementation of a cumulative computation system for retirement allowances, abolition of discrimination between factory workers and office workers, etc.

The following day, the management representative for the local factory, promising that he would get in touch with the company headquarters in Seoul and get an answer by 3 May, asked the workers to break up their sit-in but the workers, who by now increased in number to some 600, turned it down, demanding a face-to-face meeting with the company president. The company vice president came down to Pusan at 1455 hours to cope with the situation among other things and tried to somehow pacify the workers still carrying on their sit-in, without presenting any concrete settlement proposal. This incensed the workers, and some 200 workers began breaking window panes and telephones at 1930 hours and set fire to the company office.

At about 2035 hours they threw desks and documents into a bonfire and, breaking into the office on the second floor of the main building, set fire to it. The workers confronted at the front gate the police called out in response to an emergency call, and dispersed at about 2350 hours only after stoning the police with some of the workers even wielding two-by-fours and iron pipes. In the confrontation 11 policemen including the riot squad leader sustained major and minor injuries, a total of 500 p'yong of floor space of the main and other buildings was destroyed or damaged by fire, and the property damage was in the hundreds of millions of won.

Some 1,000 workers, meeting once again on the morning of the 30th, elected representatives by the departments and had them discuss with the management measures to cope with the situation. As a result, they had their demands accepted except for the wage demand. Claiming that the company earnings had been worsening on account of slump, the management promised to make positive efforts as the developing situation warranted in the future.

In the end, only after the outbreak of violence were settlement measures worked out but only at a high price: 6 workers including Ch'oe Kyu-ch'ol, 26, batter-charging worker, were taken into custody on charges of violation of the martial law degree No 1, section 1, for holding assembly a demonstration without permit and 2 were indicted.

Anyway, the labor-management dispute at Dongkuk Steel, which was brought to an end only after inflicting great damage on the workers and management alike, is one that has resulted from the obstruction on the part of the management against the formation of a labor union.

One factory worker in his 30's, saying "We are angry at the anachronistic notion of the management to arbitrarily reign over us with the attitude that we should meekly accept the wage as paid, obediently performing work as assigned, feeling grateful that the management has given us work and made it possible for us to make a living," angrily continued "Because we work, the company president makes money, and in order to get paid a

living wage proportionate to work performed, we tried to form a labor union only to get frustrated, running into strong opposition of the management."

Instances of Improper Management Act against Labor

Strictly speaking, it is not yesterday or today that managements began scheming to sabotage the formation of labor unions or obstruct and weaken labor union activities. According to the Central Labor Committee statistics, the number of petitions filed by workers who had been subjected to unfavorable treatment such as dismissal on the ground that they had tried to form a labor union or had conducted labor union activities (even excluding those cases where agreement was reached before filing a petition, or those cases where the management resorted to ingenious methods of disposing of them or the workers concerned failed to file their petitions on account of their ignorance of the legal technicalities involved) was: 68 cases for 1974, 100 cases for 1975, 103 cases for 1977, 178 cases for 1979, and no less than 100 cases for the first 4 months of this year.

Such instances constitute an improper act violating the legally guaranteed right to union of the workers, an act stemming from the premodern labor-management views held by management and their lack of understanding of the labor union and as such, testify to the fact that the labor union movement in our country suffers considerable obstruction at the hands of management.

Such improper management act against labor is frequently seen in recent labor-management disputes.

--At the Chungang Kekche Popnyul T'ukho Samusa [central international lawyers and patent law office], (c.e.o. Yi Pyong-ho; location T'aep'yongno, Chung-ku, Seoul), the largest patent law and lawyers office in our country, 43 staffers formed a union local (director of the union local, Ho Sang-su) on 25 March, and notified the management. The management, on the grounds of its representative's health and of self-renewal of the profession, closed the office doors and subsequently, on 15 April, took dismissal action against the 45 union members for cause, i.e., work stoppage and discontinuance of business. Thereupon, the union members held a plenary meeting and staged a sit-in, presenting a 4-point demand: rescission of the discontinuance of business, revocation of the suspension of department head Kim Won-ho, recognition of the labor union, and acceptance of collective bargaining. Subsequently, realizing three of the four demands except for the reinstatement of department head Kim Won-ho after three sessions of labor-management negotiation, they returned to normal work.

--The union local for Namhwa Chonja [Namhwa electronics] held its inaugural meeting on 15 January at the Seoul regional local of the United

Workers Union but the application for the formation of the union local was approved as a local of the Chemical Workers Union as of 17 January. This presented a problem which was followed by an organizational dispute from the end of February. A labor-management dispute continued over the administration right of the labor union between the management supporting a minority of the union members and a majority of the union members. The situation developed into the refusal on the part of union members to leave their workplace at the end of their work shift, demanding normalization of union activities, and a police task force was mobilized. On Labor Day, 10 March, the workers staged a sit-down in front of the National Theater where a commemorative ceremony was scheduled to be held but they were taken into custody by the police. As this aggravated the situation, the union members held a general meeting on 24 March, and replaced the management-supported executive department with a new executive department supported by more than 90 percent of the union members (director of the union local, Pae Pok-cha).

--At the Cera-Art Industrial Company employing some 280 workers for the manufacture of ceramics, a union local was formed on 8 October 1979 but the management, immediately trying to force the union members to break away from the union, unjustly discharged Kim Sun-hyang (chief of the general affairs department of the local) for defying the order. Then the management formed a kept labor union and forced the workers to join it, on the one hand, and perpetrated acts of sabotage, calling the union activists recalcitrant forces. The union members contended that the Puch'on city authorities acted improperly when they approved the application of the kept union, rejecting the application of the lawfully organized union. The Kyonggi Province regional labor committee stepped in for mediation and the labor-management dispute was settled on 14 January for the time being, with agreement reached on the reinstatement of the discharged worker and cooperation in the democratic activities of the union.

--Early in 1979 the Fiber Workers Union North Cholla Province regional headquarters formed a local for Ssangma Somyu and had its application approved, but unable to take any more of the improper acts against labor on the part of the management in the course of labor-management negotiations for collective bargaining, resolved to dissolve the local at a general meeting of union members held in the factory conference room on 31 December 1979.

--The union locals for 11 Japanese companies such as Mitsubishi, Mitsui, Marubeni, C. Itoh, Sumitomo, Nissho Iwai, Nichimen, Toshoku, Toyota, Chori, Kanematsu, are being criticized by the workers for their inability to negotiate collective bargaining. The reason why the Japanese companies are not signing for collective bargaining stems from their refusal to agree to the union demands regarding the coverage of union members, the adoption of a union shop system, and the computation of retirement allowances.

--At Tonga Chonghap Sanop [Tonga general industries] (at Ch'ungmu-tong, Chung-ku, Pusan city), 58 workers formed a local for Tonga Chonghap under the Pusan regional headquarters of the United Workers Union on 4 March, and filed its application on 7 March. Unhappy with the union local, the management in subsequent negotiations for collective bargaining forced in a negative scheme the union workers to submit written notice to quit the union and at the same time, won over director of the local Chong Pok-yong, 37, to its side. The management planned to hold a general meeting of the employees on the morning of 1 April, with a view to dissolving the labor union. The United Workers Union, regarding this as an improper act against labor on the part of the management, forthwith mobilized 30 cadres of its local in the struggle to defend the union in confrontation with the management, and in the process, there was a 2-hour work stoppage at the factory. By the mediation of the Office of Labor and other competent authorities, the meeting was postponed indefinitely but the labor union, selecting the deputy director of the local as the responsible party in charge, decided to file charges of improper labor act against the management.

--At the KYONGNAM MAELL, the Kyongnam local of the Publications Workers Union formed in 1963 by the staff members of the engineering bureau of the newspaper, distributed a letter of appeal to various circles on 11 April that they were being subjected to undue pressure from the management. According to the letter of appeal, the management relieved Chong Hyong-p'il as chief typesetter of the engineering bureau who was also the director of the local, and Chi Ch'ang-chu as deputy director of the engineering bureau who was also auditor of the local, and demoted both to the status of an ordinary employee while promoting two employees who had quit the local. Contending that this constitutes an improper act against labor, a blatant sabotage act against the union, on the part of the management, the union decided to file a petition against the improper labor act on the part of the management.

The Waves of Democratization and the Vitalization of Labor Unions

As, along with the spirited political debates of late, the voice grows stronger, riding the waves of democratization, that the three labor rights must be restored and the labor movement vitalized, the organizational activities of labor unions are becoming brisk. It is pointed out that the organizational vitalization of labor unions began with the societywide demands for individual dignity and right following the 26 October incident and with the positive response to the labor unions of the workers who felt uneasy regarding wage increases and dismissals in the continuing business slump. Particularly worthy of attention among them is the vitalization of new organizations first centered around the Seoul-Inch'on area and then spreading to the Taegu-Masan area.

For example, in the case of Taegu, various labor unions are organizing their locals with considerable success--the National Metal Workers Union

Kyongbuk regional headquarters has since March organized 5 locals with some 500 members such as Asia Kongsu (150 members), Uju Sanopsa (105), Korea Iron and Steel Co, Ltd (110), and Tongmyong Sanop (40). The Fiber Workers Union Kyongbuk regional headquarters also has formed a local for Chungang Somyu (1,100), the largest single local membership, and the Chemical Workers Union, too, has organized 2 locals with 350 members, or a total of 8 locals with some 2,000 members, the apex since 1970.

As to the labor union activities in the free trade zones, considerable restrictions have been placed on the formation of labor unions and on their disputes under the special law enforced by the government in 1969 regarding foreign businesses with a view to inducing direct foreign investments.

Again, the law for the creation of free trade zones enforced 1 January 1970 provides in section 18 (labor disputes) that the provisions regarding public service business in the labor dispute mediation law shall apply to the labor disputes of the workers employed by the tenant enterprises in the free trade zones and to their mediation, thus legally restricting worker-initiated demands for the improvement of working conditions.

Accordingly, the formation of a labor union requires a permit from the Office of Labor and a labor dispute is subject to prior mediation and intercession of the Office of Labor under section 18 of the law for the creation [of free trade zones] but in reality, this has been impossible of enforcement.

A Fresh Wind Blows Even in the Free Trade Zones

--A case eloquently showing this happened at the Tongyang Suwan local of the Chonbuk regional headquarters of the United Workers Union located in the Iri Free Trade Zone. The Tongyang Suwan local was formed with 69 members on 18 May 1979. Director of the local Ch'oe Hong-kyu, 27, following the formation of the local was threatened within the company as "a Red" and derided as megalomaniac. Even as a dozen male union members quit the local under pressure of the management, he stuck to his gun, but when the management brought pressure of every description to bear on a female worker, for whom he had given reference to the company, and also on her parents, coupled with appeasement, he had no alternative but to submit his resignation to the company.

But after submitting his resignation, he committed suicide for no apparent reason. Afterward, the company and the police announced that "He killed himself of despair because he could not get married on account of his congenital deformity (cross-eyes)" but his parents never said a word.

Subsequently, Deputy Director of the local Kim Son-hui was dismissed, and an ex-Deputy Director of the local Pak Kyong-sun who had been unreasonably

transferred from post to post, became the director of the local and formed a new executive department. Last winter, sending word that the application for the formation of the local had been approved in error, the Chonbuk regional headquarters of the United Workers Union advocated the dissolution of the local. The local was eventually dissolved on the understanding that when the three labor rights were insured and labor union activities were vitalized within the free trade zone and especially when labor unions were formed at Namyang Chajae and Freo-fission [phonetic], the entire employees would receive positive support for membership. A similar case had already happened at the Hanguk Suwani in the Masan Free Trade Zone, a business under the same management.

But now, riding the waves of democratization, the wind began blowing for the formation of labor unions in the Masan Free Trade Zone. Following the formation at the end of last March of a labor union at Hokuryo Company, a firm refrigerating and processing fishery products, labor unions were also formed by Chongsang Hwasong on 23 April and by Hanguk Ssangyop Chongmil on 23 April.

--The Hokuryo local (director of the local, Yu Cha-song, 43) of the United Workers Union Kyongnam regional headquarters, which opened the forbidden door to the formation of a labor union for the first time in 9 years since the creation of free trade zones in 1970, was formed at a meeting held on 31 March in the auditorium of the Sosong-tong Labor Hall, Masan city, with 500 workers attending. But subsequently, as the fact came to light that the company had sent an oral notice of discontinuance of business to the Office of Labor on the ground that "It was difficult to procure the necessary material," some 700 union members lodged a strong protest to the management, pointing out that it was a heinous plot to destroy the labor union. Company Executive Director Naofumi Sato, explaining that it had nothing to do with the formation of the labor union, promised normal operation of the company business, which is still continuing.

--The Chongsang Hwasong local was inaugurated at a meeting held with some 100 workers in attendance in the auditorium of the south Kyongsang Province Conference of the Federation of Korean Trade Unions at Sinp'o-tong, Masan city, at 1900 hours 23 April. The workers, pledging to correctly establish a labor-management cooperation system, to take the lead in seeking a way out of the business slump and developing the enterprise, to do their utmost to protect the rights and interests of the workers, embarked on their activities, electing Cho Hyon-t'aek as director of the local and forming an executive department.

--The Hanguk Ssangyop Chongmil Kongop Chusik Hoesa [Korean Ssangyop Precision Industrial Co, Ltd] local, the third union to be formed in the Masan Free Trade Zone, at a meeting with 51 union members attending held at the Masan Hall of Federation of Korean Trade Unions at 1900 hours 24 April, resolved to exercise legal unity, insure lawful collective

bargaining right, protect the rights and interests of the workers, improve their social position, and correctly establish a labor-management system, and elected Yi Ung-chin as director of the local.

In the case of the Iri area where are located 100 enterprises with approximately 120,000 workers, a local was formed in April for Namyang Chajae, a 100-percent Japanese fiber company in the free trade zone, and locals for 5 enterprises in the industrial estate--Ssangyong Textile, Tong Yang Moolsan, T'aech'ang, Ssangbangul, and Taebong--have also been formed. And in areas outside the industrial estate, for the 2 enterprises of Samyang Ramyon and Olympus a total of 8 locals have been newly formed after the 26 October incident.

In the Ulsan area, on 26 March in the auditorium of the Ulsan Area Conference was formed a Chemical Workers Union local for Hankook Caprolactam Corp producing nylon raw materials and ammonium sulphate fertilizer. It has 120 members and Kim Chung-kon was elected as director of the local.

The Vicious Circle of Slump--Suspension or Discontinuance of Business--Nonpayment of Payroll

Our country's economic growth for the first quarter of this year registered 3.5 percent, the lowest quarterly growth ever. Compared to the same quarter of last year, this is 9.3 percent lower, and particularly, the mining and manufacturing industries show this tendency more significantly.

According to a survey by the Economic Planning Board, as of the end of last February, the manufacturing business operated at 68.2 percent of capacity which was 15 percent lower than the same period of last year. According to Ministry of Commerce and Industry statistics, 24 percent of medium and small enterprises had to cut back operations, suspend or discontinue business on account of sales slump and financing difficulties. As a matter of fact, as laid-off workers of many industrial estates such as Ch'angwon, Ulsan, P'ohang and Kumi, returned home to their native places, apartments and rental rooms in the vicinity became vacant, and even some housing projects have been suspended.

To cite the case of Hyundai Motor Company alone, one of the leading motor companies in the country, on account of a cutback in operations necessitated by sales slump, 813 skilled workers were laid off en masse early last January for a period of 34 days, and in the process of the merger of Hyundai International, Inc and Hyundai Heavy Industries Co, Ltd, too, some 2,000 workers lost their jobs. Tongyang Vinylon, the pioneer in the chemical fiber industry of our country, went out of business on 4 April, a victim of slump, and 93 workers suddenly lost their jobs.

They Even Attempted to Sell Off Garnished Scrap Metal

--Four employees including Miss Yi Chong-suk of Taerim Pongjae (representative, Pak Ok-tol), as the management closed its doors on 20 January and there was no way to get the unpaid wages (for November and December of last year) for 85 employees, stormed the factory on 21 January and attempted to take out and sell of 48 company sewing machines which had been garnished by the creditors, but were arrested by the police before they could do so, on information of the management. The other employees went to the Map'o police and demanded their release.

--Tonggwang Kangop [steel] (representative, Kim Hak-su) in Ch'angwon, which had been producing fittings such as steel tower gold [gold-tipped lightning rods] since 1976, suffered failures and suspended business last November but failed to pay 240 employees their October and November wages and their retirement allowances totaling some 187 million won. Kyongnam Bank, the creditor bank, garnished the company land, buildings and machinery to satisfy its credit of 3.7 billion won, but some 200 workers, unable to take it any longer as the management had failed 6 times to keep its promise to pay, used trucks to take out and sell off garnished scrap metal.

--The whirlwind of slump even hit large enterprises and Tong Myung Timber Company, a company of leading financial clique of Pusan, on account of timber shortage and financial difficulties, had to have some 3,000 workers stop work beginning 31 March, and Koryo Wonyang, the largest domestic fishery company, following the layoff of its clerical workers, failed to meet a 700 million won payroll, running into the protest of some 2,700 crew members and their families.

--Some 1,300 workers of the Taebong local under the United Workers Union Kyongbuk regional headquarters, in an effort to get their unpaid wages of 30 million won when the company discontinued business, sent 35 representatives to the company president's home in Seoul for a 7-day sit-down. Again, since 30 November the representatives have been continuing their demand at the company president's home for payment of their outstanding wages, saying "Let's live together."

--At Tai Kwang Ind Co, Ltd in Tongnae, Pusan, the company president on 4 February attempted an appeasement, saying "On account of the slump of late, I propose to cut my own salary by 10 percent. What is your opinion?" only to run into the vigorous protest of his employees--not a laughing matter.

--More cases: At Samwon Mulsan in Kwangju, some 100 workers launched a sit-in on 23 April, demanding some 33 million won in unpaid wages; and in the Chinju area, Taewon Yogaek and Yonghwa Yogaek attempted to pay by [rubber] checks retirement allowances amounting to some 120 million won to some 500 workers who retired last March, and the Chinju regional office of the Office of Labor began an investigation into the situation.

As can be seen in that nonpayment of payroll accounts for 560 cases out of the 801 cases of labor-management disputes from the beginning of the year up to the end of April, there are most likely other nonpayments behind suspension of discontinuance of business and cutbacks in operations, and cases of flight of enterprise proprietors or of drastic struggle to get payments and other self-preservation measures of the workers are visibly increasing in number.

--Seiichi Ota, representative of Hanae Sanop in the Masan Free Trade Zone, after filing notice of discontinuance of business on 16 January, fled leaving behind unpaid wages of some 7 million won for 115 workers along with outstanding requirement allowances amounting to some 30 million won, and the police put out an all-points bulletin for him on 6 March. An order not to leave the country has been issued against Seiichi Ota who has outstanding debts totaling some 500 million won including unpaid wages, outstanding bank loans and company debentures.

What accounts for the tendency of flight to their homelands or other places on the part of the foreign enterprise proprietors who suspend or discontinue their business in the free trade zones is the fact that most of them are "fly-by-night export businessmen" who, becoming tenant businessmen with capital less than a million dollars and installing simple facilities, ran labor-intensive business, maximally taking advantage of the benefits of export financing.

--Yang Yong-mo, representative of Taehan Chikmul [Korean textile] located at Chamaa-tong, Tongnae-ku, Pusan, shut the factory gate on 7 January and fled, leaving behind some 10 million won in unpaid wages to some 100 workers for November and December of last year. The 100 workers who lost their jobs, filed a petition with the Tongnae office of the Office of Labor to garnish Yang's properties to satisfy their unpaid wages.

--Kim Tong-man, representative of Yunch'ang Sanop, located Tangni-tong, So-ku, Pusan city, disappeared on 8 March, leaving behind some 20 million won in unpaid wages for some 170 workers for January and February and their retirement allowances. Without the benefit of any measure for compensation, the workers are running from factory to factory in search of jobs. Yunch'ang Sanop was a sewing work subcontractor and as such, the building was a rented one and the sewing machines were also rented from Sorim Sanop, so there were no tangible properties left behind which could be sold off to pay the unpaid wages.

There are appearing cases that payroll nonpayment on account of suspension or discontinuance of business, cutbacks in operations, and business slump, is driving the workers, who even with wages paid are already experiencing difficulties in making a living, to seek self-preservation measures by selling off company properties to satisfy their unpaid wages.

--At Sejong Somyu at Yangjong, Pusan, there was a case that on 20 February a standing director of the company beat up a worker demanding his unpaid wages. Tonggu Mulsan in Taegu city demanded [an exchange of] memorandum that retirement allowances would not be made a subject of discussion. As employee scholarships are cut back allegedly on account of business slump, the number of student employees in industrial companies has been drastically reduced.

Thus in the vicious circle of business slump--cutback in operations--suspension or discontinuance of business--dismissal and nonpayment of wages--sit-in--it is only the workers who are subjected to undeserved sacrifices, and to the workers who find it difficult even to make a living from hand to mouth, dismissal and nonpayment of wages are tantamount to a death sentence. It cannot but be a very serious situation that there should be such frequent labor-management disputes over unpaid wages unlike the disputes in previous years which used to be characterized by wage increase demands. Even though belatedly in light of the frequency and seriousness of the situation, there should be serious soul-searching for providing some legal mechanism for priority settlement of unpaid wages.

A 12-Hour Shift in the Food Industry Too

The ILO formed immediately following WW I already in Covenant I provided for limiting a day's work in industrial enterprises to 8 hours. Our country's Labor Standard Law also provides for an 8-hour work day, but low wages and long work hours in bad labor environments prevail that fly in the face of the provisions of the ILO or the Labor Standard Law.

Only a little while ago when the NEW YORK TIMES carried an investigative report on the Hui Tai Confectionery under the headline the ROK economic growth rests on low wages and sweat, the matter became a social issue. In fact, the food industry is still working a 12-hour shift in general but at times, between day and night shifts, as many as 18 hours are worked. During a seasonal peak, for what is called "double time work," excessive labor of more than 20 hours is enforced.

The enforcement of long hours of labor is being further intensified by the wage system. According to a survey of the Chemical Workers Union, the average wage paid per worker in the food industry (confections, bread, instant noodles and dairy products) for October 1979 was 99,065 won, of which the base pay on an 8-hour work-day basis was 48,554 or no more than 49 percent of the total wage received. The current wage system is indeed a low wage system under which a worker could earn no more than 48,554 won on an 8-hour work-day basis as explicitly provided for in the Labor Standard Law.

Consequently, if a worker is to eat three square meals a day, he has to unhesitatingly accept overtime work including graveyard shift and work

on rest day, which accounts for 50 percent of his wage, risking his health to earn various kinds of allowances. For example, out of the aforementioned 95,065 won, overtime pay accounts for 23,759 won or 24 percent, night differentials for 9,594 won or 10 percent, other allowances for 17,158 won or 17 percent; in other words, he earns 51 percent of his total wage by extra labor over and above 8-hour work.

In particular, as off-season work brings a reduction in the various allowances, the workers have no stable work and life base. Consequently, as the workers look for better jobs, there occurs a frequent personnel turnover, which is becoming a factor in greatly hampering the company in management, let alone rendering the worker's life unstable. This can be easily seen in that among the food industry businesses where the worker turnover exceeds 100 percent there are Sam-Lip Foods Ind Co, Ltd (143.6 percent), Seoul Foods Co, Ltd (172.1 percent), Nhong Shim Foods Co, Ltd (109.4 percent), Lotte Samgang (177.2 percent), or that in the case of Hanguk Conti [Continental] Foods the turnover reached 247.5 percent, with the result that the continuous service of individual workers was no more than 4 months.

Under such conditions, particularly under conditions that the base pay accounts for no more than 49 percent of the total wage as in the food industry, if the 8-hour work-day system is to be strictly enforced, it must be said to be important to guarantee the workers earnings equivalent to the average wage on the current 12-hour work-day basis, in the event that an 8-hour work-day system is enforced.

Problems Stemming from the Law-Abiding Struggle

The question of an 8-hour work-day system has been arising in the form of a law-abiding struggle, one form of the labor movement, and as the workers of Hai Tai Confectionery Co, Ltd demanded in August 1979 the implementation of an 8-hour work-day system, this came up as a serious problem. Of course, in the process they not only found it difficult to solve the question of guaranteeing the same earnings as before but in the political situation, in the labor situation prevailing at the time, they had to go through many difficulties such as violence, dismissal and voluntary resignation. Nonetheless, it is highly noteworthy that there was an organizational move in real earnest to realize an 8-hour work-day system.

The Chemical Workers Union, convening in September 1979 a meeting of the food industry workers subcommittee consisting of representatives of 11 food industry locals affiliated with it, including the Hai Tai Confectionery Co, Ltd where 2 12-hour shifts were in force, resolved to launch a joint struggle to establish an 8-hour work-day system and guarantee wage earnings. Entrusted with the collective bargaining right of the 11 locals, the Chemical Workers Union headquarters held on 11 September 1979 the first session of central labor-management negotiations and reached

an agreement in principle with management on the changeover to an 8-hour work shift but could not reach any agreement on the time of the changeover and on a guarantee to make up for the loss in wage earnings.

Anyway, the Chemical Workers Union headquarters gave positive guidance in the analysis of prevailing conditions at individual unit locals and in the conduct of labor-management negotiations, and for their party, the food industry companies each set up an experimental department toward changeover to an 8-hour work system. The Hai Tai Confectionery Co, Ltd, organizing a gift section with 90 newly employed female workers, implemented 2 8-hour shifts, setting aside 2 hours for training with appropriate allowances paid; as a result, the work output was equivalent to 11-hour work output. The Lotte Confectionery also cut back 1 hour each from work shifts beginning October 1979.

The bakeries too cut back the 18-hour work system to a 12-hour system, beginning October 1979. Only the dairy companies were implementing an 8-hour work system because it happened to be an off-season but ways are yet to be found to cope with the peak season in 1980.

But it is a fact hard to deny that the management effort for changeover to an 8-hour work-day system, rather than being a sincere effort, has an aspect of a delay tactic, avoiding to come to grips with the intrinsic character of the problem. To wit, even setting aside the question of wages for the sake of argument in spite of the agreement reached in principle, the management showed reluctance, putting forward problems such as (1) the 12-hour work system changed over to an 8-hour work system, it would be unavoidable to augment the work force by 50 percent but it has no resources to meet the increased payroll and (2) an 8-hour work system is difficult to implement in light of the operational process and (3) the work force employed for the peak season would have to be cut back for the off-season.

The Chemical Workers Union headquarters, centered around the problems put forward by the management, analyzed conditions that could prevail industrywide and, presupposing changeover to an 8-hour work-day system and guarantee for wage earnings, determined: (1) the additional burden on personnel expenses would be only 25 percent, even taking account of the meal time, rest breaks, and growth in productivity; (2) an actual investigation into the production process and the processing time required for major products of the food industry brought to light that there are no relations between the operational process and an 8-hour work system; (3) as to the problem of personnel adjustment for off-season, their reassignment to equipment maintenance and safety training would suffice except for ice cream and dairy business and furthermore, it could be compensated completely by business growth.

Based on such an analysis of actual conditions, the Chemical Workers Union headquarters approached the second session of the central labor-management

negotiations on 14 December 1979, presenting demands such as (1) changeover to 3 8-hour work shifts be implemented effective January 1980 along with guarantee for the same wage earnings and (2) effectuation of working conditions within the provisions of the Labor Standard Law. But the management of the 11 food companies, (1) stating that they were planning to change over to 3 8-hour work shifts about March 1980 and (2) without any clear-cut counterproposal for the guarantee of the same wage earnings, consistently maintained an attitude to neutralize the wage increases for 1980.

The 8-Hour Work-Day System and Guarantee for the Same Wage Earnings

As the bilateral negotiations fell into a state of marking time on account of the insincerity and delay tactics on the part of the management, the Chemical Workers Union headquarters decided to make the establishment of an 8-hour work-day system and guarantee for the same wage earnings as a joint struggle guideline and on 8 February 1980, under provisions of Section 9, subsection 1, of the National Defense Law, filed petition with the Office of Labor, the main authorities in charge, as well as Seoul Special City and Kyonggi Province authorities, for mediation in the dispute with the 11 food companies.

This mediation task which was thrust upon the administrative authorities at the time, was transferred to a labor committee on 14 March under provisions of the Office of Labor regulation No 257 and a decision was not handed down until nearly a month later. The Seoul City Labor Committee handed down a decision by authority on 11 April, its implementation retroactive to 1 April, that the 4 companies of Lotte Confectionery, Tongyang Confectionery, Crown Confectionery and Seoul Foods cut back the current 12-hour work system to an 8-hour work system, pay the same amounts of the base pay, overtime pay, night differentials, and other allowances as decided under the 12-hour work system so as to guarantee the same wage earnings, and increase wages 10-12 percent as wage increase for 1980.

Also, on 14 April, under the influence of the mediation of the Seoul City Labor Committee, the 5 companies of Hai Tai Confectionery, Samyang Foods, Sam-Lip Foods, Nhong Shim, and Lotte Samgang reached a labor-management agreement, just before a mediation by authority would have become necessary, the main parts of the content of the agreement being the implementation of an 8-hour work-day system and guarantee for the same wage earnings, and wage increases of 5-20 percent as wage increases for 1980.

In the case of the Hanguk Continental and Dae Yle Dairy Products Co, Ltd a labor-management agreement was reached under the influence of the decisions of Seoul Special City and the Office of Labor. The Hanguk Continental agreement covers the implementation of an 8-hour work-day system and guarantee for the same wage earnings and a 10 percent wage increase as wage increase for 1980.

The establishment of the 8-hour work-day system, guarantee for the same wage earnings, and wage increases for 1980, which have been won by the organized and steadfast struggle of the Chemical Workers Union headquarters and its 11 locals, exerted incisive influence on the bus and fiber industry businesses where the workers had long been subjected to long hours of labor for low wages. On 15 April the National Bus Workers Union filed petition with competent authorities such as the Office of Labor and Seoul Special City for cutting back the work hours to the legal 8 hours for the drivers and conductresses of intra- and extra-city buses. On 18 April, after deliberation on the petition regarding collective bargaining filed by 34 locals including the Taesin Somyu local under the Seoul regional headquarters of the National Fiber Workers Union, the Seoul City Labor Committee handed down a mediation decision by authority that the 12-hour work day be cut back to 8 hours and varying wage increases be made according to job classification. Thus, the influence is expansively spreading to the entire labor world.

Labor Unions of Financial Institutions Also Launch Wage Increase Struggle

The pay scales of organs with government capital require the approval of the competent ministries after consultation with the Economic Planning Board, and it is a fact that wage increases by such organs exert considerable influence on the wage increase by the private sector. Now, the pay scales of those organs with government capital, tied to the government wage increase guidelines, have in general been below the standard of the private sector. The wage increase guideline has always been set lower than the standard of the private sector.

For this year, the Economic Planning Board, laying down at the beginning of the year a wage guideline for an increase of 15 percent or less for the private sector, notified the 26 organs with government capital to increase the wages 5 percent for officers and 10 percent for staff members. But the labor unions of financial institutions and Korea Electric Company and Coal Corporation, pointing out that the 5-10 percent increases had been decided upon prior to increases in foreign exchange and interest rates, came out from the outset to reject the Planning Board's notification as unacceptable, demanding a minimum of 20 percent increase.

--The labor unions of financial institutions held a meeting on 14 February of directors of their locals of Kukch'aek and private banks in the city and discussed measures to push for wage increases, rejecting the Planning Board's 10 percent wage increase line and demanding a 20 percent wage increase.

In light of such moves and anticipating that this year's price increase rate would far exceed the originally projected rate, the government proposed to increase the 5-10 percent wage increase guideline by 5 percent to 15 percent, and this government proposal became a fact as Yi Han-pin, deputy premier and concurrently director of the Economic Planning Board,

urged on 18 March 1980: "The enterprises with government capital, in connection with the pay adjustment for their officers and staff members for this year, should exercise self-control and voluntarily abide by the 15 percent wage increase line laid down by the government as a wage-increase guideline for the private sector at the beginning of the year."

Against this, on 17 April 1980, 68 standing cadres of 8 locals for banks under the National Labor Union of Financial Institutions demanded a 20.6 percent wage increase and self-regulation of financial institutions, and waged a 37-hour sit-in from 0900 hours. In their statement they also reaffirmed the pledge "To reestablish a correct idea and posture of the labor movement," calling for "Respecting the labor-management relations and guaranteeing them in terms of system, instead of putting them into a framework of more formalism." Breaking up their sit-in for the time being at 1000 hours on the following day, 18 April, they resolved to stage another sit-in for an indefinite period in the bank president's office on a local-unit basis in a second phase, in the event that their demands were not met by 21 April, but the annual wage increase struggle came to a conclusion on 23 April when the Management Conference of Financial Institutions agreed to a 15 percent wage increase on average, realization of tellers' allowances, and readjustment of wage increases for female employees.

At the Yong-Nam Chemical Co, Ltd and the Chinhae Chemical Co, Ltd, too, the workers demanded wage increases, staging a sit-in and refusing to leave at end of shift. But Chinhae Chemical and Yong-Nam Chemical, both of which are companies with capital from the Korea General Corporation (president, Paek Son-yop), itself a company with government capital, took the stand that they could never agree to any increase beyond the 15 percent wage increase guideline for enterprises with government capital.

--In the case of Yong-Nam Chemical, holding an extraordinary meeting of delegates of the local on 16 April, the local demanded a 38.5 percent wage increase, but as the management had nothing to offer in the way of a counterproposal, the local mounted a sit-in for an indefinite period, as of 1900 hours of the 17th. At about 2000 hours amid the sit-in, another meeting of the delegates was held and after the resolution was passed to insist on the 38.5 percent increase line, a vote was taken for yes or no on continuing the sit-in. But even before counting the ballots, at 2200 hours the director of the local dissolved the sit-in and immediately thereafter at 2300 hours, a labor-management agreement was reached on a 17.5 percent wage increase with a 5.3 percent military service allowance added.

--In the case of Chinhae Chemical, some 450 union members met in the company mess hall at 1900 hours on 15 August, refusing to leave at end of shift and staged a 3-day sit-in, demanding a 40 percent wage increase plus various allowances and installation of welfare facilities for the

workers. It is known that even though Chinhae Chemical has provided welfare facilities such as housing, billiard tables and tennis courts for its 100 cadres, the company is paying neither hazard pay nor special allowances to the workers who really have to work at workplaces filled with obnoxious smells and harmful gases. But in the case of Chinhae Chemical, too, the annual wage increase struggle was concluded with a labor-management agreement reached on conditions similar to Yong-Nam Chemical.

Working Conditions, Zero--Garment Factories in the Ch'onggye Area

"There are some 400 garment factories in the Peace Market, and their labor environments are such that 15 workers are assigned to a floor space of 2 p'yong to work side by side with sewing machines and other equipment, so crowded that there is hardly room for them to move around and what is more, between the ceiling and floor of a regular story an intermediate floor has been created, each ceiling barely 1.6 meters high, with hardly room for the workers to straighten their backs, and as the workers work under high-intensity lighting, most of them have to squint when outside in the bright sunlight. In such environment they have to work 13 to 16 hours every day including holidays except for the first and third Sundays, and a special monthly leave for women is out of the question. In particular, in the case of assistant workers, who are young girls of about 13 years of age, they still draw the same monthly salary of 3,000 won as 4-5 years ago. In addition, for their daylong labor in rooms filled with dust rising from cloths, they even suffer from tuberculosis of the lungs and a nervous digestive ailment, thus greatly threatening the health of girls in their growing period."

This is a report carried 10 years ago by the KYONGHYANG SINMUN (the 19 July 1970 issue) on the conditions of the garment factories in the Peace Market at Ch'onggyech'on 6-ka. In its 7 October issue of the same year, under the headline "Working Conditions, Zero--Some 20,000 Including Girls Subjected to Hard Labor" the same paper reported on the workers employed in the area. But the rights of the workers guaranteed by the law are still being thoroughly ignored.

On 13 November 1970 some 20 garment workers of the Ch'onggyech'on area staged a sit-in with placards "We are not machine" and "Observe the Labor Standard Law" but the police broke up the sit-in. In spite of the presence of the Labor Standard Law, there occurred the grim case of self-immolation by setting fire to oneself by Chon T'ae-il who left behind a suicide note "Make sure that I have not died in vain."

Ten years later, on 8 April 1980, some 200 members of the Ch'onggye Area Garment Workers Union staged a sit-in in the penthouse office of the union in the Peace Market, demanding "An average 35-40 percent wage increase," "A 150 percent annual bonus," "Banning of 11-13 hour labor," and "Tradewide implementation of a retirement allowance system."

They also asked the government for "Guarantee of the three labor rights," "The restoration of rights and reinstatement of the discharged workers, victims of the labor movement," and "Tax benefits to small businesses." Mrs Yi So-sen, 52, who 10 years ago watched her son (Chon T'ae-il) die with deathbed wish "Mother, please do what I could not do, after my death," took part, in her capacity as standing consultant of the Ch'onggye Area Garment Workers Union, in the sit-in day and night for 10 days, an inspiration to the sit-in workers.

There are altogether some 16,000 workers in the Peace Market area and most of them are groaning under low wages in narrow workplaces without ventilation in bad environments such as dust, noise and poor lighting. Most of them are working 11-13 hours a day without overtime pay. One worker says pleadingly: "On top of insufficient nutrition, most of the workers suffer from eye diseases, respiratory troubles, digestive ailments, nervous disorder and fatigue syndrome."

At workplaces or sit-in sites are seen many young girls 13-15 years old. Ten years ago or now, outwardly nothing seems to have changed significantly. The only thing that has unmistakably changed from 10 years ago is the presence of labor unions which are working positively to protect the rights and interests of union members and improve their working conditions.

The question is the limitation stemming from the smallness of the businesses. The Peace Market labor-management dispute was settled on the morning of 15 April when the union and management representatives accepted the mediation proposal put forward by the Office of Labor for (1) an average 29 percent wage increase and (2) payment of retirement allowances by businesses employing more than 10 workers but less than 16 workers, but out of some 670 businesses, some 300 business proprietors who were compelled to assume the additional burden of retirement allowances for employing more than 10 workers but less than 16 workers, rejected the mediation proposal and came out to directly confront the labor union.

Anyway, thanks to the resolute struggle of the union despite the strong resistance of the management, to the mediation of the authorities, to the repeated discussions by both sides, the 10-day-long labor-management dispute of the Ch'onggye area garment business was settled, recording an epochal success in the history of our country's labor movement.

First, the Ch'onggye Area Garment Workers Union members, even though suffering a loss by giving up the bonus, championed the interests of the working class on a wider basis, insisting on retirement allowances payable by businesses employing more than 10 but less than 16 workers. As a consequence, it is expected that the payment of retirement allowances will be extensively applied nationwide to some 130,000 workers in industrial businesses each employing 10-15 workers.

Second, it may be pointed out that the union asked the government authorities to extend tax benefits to small businesses. Under our economic structure where lopsided benefits have been extended only to large enterprises so that big financial cliques could emerge in a matter of a few years, it cannot but be a noteworthy phenomenon that the workers should have come forward to cry protection for small businesses.

Workers Dismissed from Dongil Textile and the Aftermaths

"The fifth company we went to seek a job after dismissal from Dongil Textile was Dainong Textile in Anyang. We were welcomed with open arms because Dainong in Anyang was perennially running help-wanted advertisements, always short of employees. Overjoyed with hiring skilled workers such as my friends Sun-ae, Yong-sun and Yong-cha, the company gave us high starting pay. The workplace atmosphere was also good, and all of us, making up our minds to work here for a long time with all our hearts, worked out substantive plans to save up to 1 million won each and how to spend our spare time as well. All of us decided to stay in the dormitory. Even though the workplaces were not normally running short of working hands, the situation was such that we were asked to bring in experienced friends. But wait a minute, on the 15th day one of our friends came crying 'We're all dismissed!' How in the world...? Suddenly I felt strength go out of my legs that I wanted to sit down. In spite of myself, my hands were uncontrollably trembling. A little while later, in response to his summons I went to see the foreman in charge. He questioned why I did not tell that I had worked for Dongil Textile and told me I must leave because I committed forgery of company documents. I pleaded 'Please allow me to work here as I will do my best,' but he said there was nothing he could do because it was an order from management although he knew I was a good worker."

This is part of a personal diary of Miss Mun Hyon-ran, 25, who was thrown out of every company she worked, on account of the "black list" (recording the names of the 124 discharged workers, their dates of birth, their resident I.D. numbers, their addresses and their last occupation) distributed in the name of Kim Yong-t'ae, chairman of the Fiber Workers Union who was discharged from the Inch'on Mill of Dongil Textile on 1 April 1978.

The third company from which Miss Mun was discharged was a slipper factory called Hanbi Sanop. It was not a fiber company, a small company at that, so she thought she could work here without worry but it was not to be. One day the general manager called her in and asked "You were employed by Dongil Textile on 12 February 1976. Your employee number was 413. Your work team was No 1 team, wasn't it?" He even mentioned the employee number Miss Mun had long forgot.

On 21 February 1978 the union local for the Inch'on Mill of Dongil Textile held a regular meeting of delegates under the watchful eyes of the police

and the Fiber Workers Union cadres but by several score thugs carrying two-by-fours and honey buckets the meeting place was turned into an arena of violence and blood spattered with human excreta. On account of the ensuing demonstration and sit-in in protest against this "human excreta incident," as many as 124 workers, even as they were discharged en masse on 1 April 1978, had to live for 2 years a life of dismissal, police custody and jail.

Now, the world has changed a lot. Release of the incarcerated and partial restoration of their civil rights have been achieved, and [expelled] professors and students have been reinstated. But nowhere was to be heard the news of reinstatement of undeservedly discharged workers. Under such circumstances, they did not take it lying down. Some 30 workers discharged by Dongil Textile, going into the office of the chairman of the Federation of Korean Trade Unions, staged a sit-in from 1400 hours of 25 April this year, for an indefinite period. The FKTU Central Committee, unlike prior to the 26 October incident, resolved "To positively strive for reinstatement of the discharged Dongil Textile workers" and the government authorities, too, pledged to endeavor to have the discharged workers reinstated, but so far, there have been no significant, responsible measures taken.

Now Is the Time for All to Reflect

Some 400 workers of the Pup'yong Factory (representative, Mun Pak) of Bando Sangsa Co, Ltd, too, are continuing a sit-in in shifts at end of work shift from 18 April. In addition to their demands for increasing daily wages to 5,192 won for male workers and to 3,159 won for female workers, the workers are also demanding the implementing of an average wage system, hobongje, and a cumulative retirement allowance system.

The Fiber Workers Union local for Bando Sangsa is widely known as a model democratic labor union. But as recently as 3 years ago, the employees numbered some 1,000, but the management, farming out company business to subcontractor companies in an effort to destroy the union, has since been pursuing a policy of attrition without hiring any more new employees. This is the same technique used by Y. H. Industrial Co, Ltd where the union local member employees numbered at the time when the local was formed but the number was no more than 300 when the company closed its doors in August of last year.

At present, the Bando Sangsa workers cry "For us workers, too, guarantee the minimum level of living as human beings." In the case of Y. H. workers, their wages were higher than those of the workers of subcontractor companies but the workers' wages of Bando Sangsa, a company of one of the largest financial cliques, are below those of the workers of subcontractor companies. Thus, Cho Kum-pun, director of the Bando Sangsa local, declared on 22 April to begin personal fasting struggle for an indefinite period.

Director Cho of the local, contending in her declaration "The fact that for the women workers with 10 years' service with Bando Sangsa, the daily wage is 1,590 won eloquently shows how much we have been exploited. For last year alone, a year claimed to be one of a general slump, the company made the ridiculously high profit of 3.4 billion won," declared her grim resolution to struggle to regain the workers' lost right to living, asking a question in return "How could we idly look on the callousness of the financial clique even refusing to pay a living wage to the employees shedding their blood and sweat for the growth of the company?"

The intrinsic seriousness of our country's labor problems basically stems from the economic development policy which had no alternative but to sacrifice the workers in terms of structure in order to realize the objective of pursuing double profit of domestic and foreign capitals under the export-oriented high-growth policy depending in large measure on foreign capital for the past 20 years.

What is more, the amendment for the worse on several occasions of labor-related laws aimed at reinforcing such system, "The interim law excepting enterprises with foreigners' capital," and the restriction of basic labor rights and regulations governing labor unions under the National Defense Law, have caused the current explosive state of the labor movement, unable to minimize and dissolve through a normal labor movement the various aspects of dissatisfaction of the workers which had been predestined to come to a head in terms of structure.

But the fact remains that the government organs, companies and certain corrupt labor unions, still unable to see the logic for their fundamental self-examination or self-rectification against such state of affairs, are rather doing everything they can to protect their vested interests and work out stop-gap measures, immersed in the old inertia and bad habits the same as before.

As to the outstanding large financial cliques of our country, even as they enjoy funding in large sums plus various kinds of benefits from the money paid by the people, they are committing the anachronistic error of striving to prevent the formation of labor unions and deciding on joint actions in the face of the current state of affairs, regarding it as "A challenge to the free economic system."

Now is the time for all to reflect and lend a willing ear to the ear demands of the workers. If we do not lend a willing ear to their demands, the workers will surely try to make us reflect.

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IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF SABUK COAL MINE CASE

Seoul SINDONGA in Korea Jun 80 pp 190-201

[Article by Kim Ch'ung-kun, reporter of TONGA ILBO City Editor's Section: "The Miners, Having Tried for Fleeting Stimulus and Excitement to Give Outright Vent to Their Long Pent-Up Anger, Are Now Reflecting on Themselves"]

[Text] 'Not a Riot But an Effort To Survive'

Sab uk-ri, Sabuk-up, Chongson County, Kangwon Province

This place, cradled in the Sabuk mine of Tongwon coalfield which is thickly populated by 30,000 people, is the heart of the T'aebaek Coalfields, a mining village in the mountains which looks peaceful. The inhabitants who have come from all corners of the country, speak with different local accents and have different backgrounds except for one thing they share in common--eating the rice bought with money earned by working under two skies--crawling under the ceilings of pitch-dark pits.

But the whirlwind that swept this village for 4 consecutive days was uncontrollable. The angry miners even smashed the labor union office, let alone the mining office which used to provide their livelihood, and set fire to everything. They occupied the police substation and, stripping the substation chief, dragged him around, naked. Some of the people shouted "Put a nose ring and drag him around."

Armed with picks and shovels, the miners erected a barricade at the entrance to the village, blocking traffic, and beat up outsiders as they came. Enticing the police into a gully, they stoned them and beat up fallen policemen with clubs. As the effect of wine wore off, they drank again and indulged day and night in destruction and violence.

Only until yesterday, when they met in the street, they exchanged silent greetings with their eyes with "samo nim" [honorable wife] of the director of the union local. This "samo nim" they stripped and hung her by the bulletin board, subjecting her to humiliation beyond description. They threw stones at the car carrying reporters and beat reporters

up at random. It was not the men along who were to be feared. Children and women wielding briquet tongs and fulling pins were even more violent.

As the rumor spread that the police would be mounting armed operations to put them down, some then hotly proposed bearing arms while others opposed arming, saying "we are not reds, are we?" and they even came to grasping each other by the throat. Even in the thick of the terrifying rioting was constantly heard a voice of urging self-restraint from violent acts which would be met by the sneer of some "was there ever anyone who would lend a willing ear to our plea?" and every time they sneered, they drank some more from the wine jug.

The old miners, now drunk, would eat their hearts out, asking who would feed their wives and children from the very day they could not work, while the self-scorn of the younger miners "living, we barely make it from hand to mouth; taken ill with anthracosilicosis, we die an ignominious death, or is there any other way?" spurred drastic actions. To the approaching reporters, they shouted "to you, what we are doing may seem to be nothing but a riot, but we are doing this to survive," and grabbing the reporters' cameras, threw them to the ground.

The inhabitants refrained from venturing outside, and stores and markets either remained closed all day or closed no later than 1800 hours. There were instances in which a stone as a missile flew through a window into a room where the family gathered at dinner table, and muck fell through a slate roof into a family room.

In Sabuk-ri, under surveillance by the unnerved police from a 4 km perimeter, the state power was paralyzed which left a vacuum in law and order. About movements in Sabuk-ri under occupation of the miners, the police heard from those taxi drivers who somehow managed to get in and get out of the village. Meanwhile, police intelligence officers, sent into the village disguised as miners wearing work clothes, were never able to get near the heart of the situation, and came back with only unfounded rumors and mininformation, thus the headquarters for coping with the situation behind the 4 km perimeter was frequently thrown into confusion.

The police operations attempted on 21 and 22 April to regain the police substantiation and pacify the miners ended in failure, running into strong resistance of the miners. The miners never wanted to believe the police or hold talks with them which, it would appear, they never thought would be of any help.

At least in the eyes of the miners, administrative organs or government authorities always sided with the management and would never be concerned about them. Firmly believing themselves to be "the children forsaken"

by the government or society, they demanded nothing but to meet the company president and the director of the union local who was denounced as a kept man.

'Who Lent a Willing Ear to Our Voice?'

Changed were the faces of the miners on the night of 23 April when they appeared at the negotiating table after 4 days of excitement and rioting which burned Saku with grievances and rancors.

The miners had drunk soju [hard liquor] to burn away at a stroke their long heartbreaking grievances, overcome by excitement, but now, reminding themselves of the faces of "the high-ranking people" and "company cadres," whom they were about to meet face-to-face, they drank again.

To the miners, who have no technical skills, no resources to rent another room or buy a bicycle-drawn cart, the most fearful thing was that they might be thrown out of the mine. Ultimately, when they looked back on their behavior for the past 4 days, they found themselves seized with a fresh sense of fear. Again, it was as clear as the light from experience that a miner "branded" by the management as "a representative or leader of the rioting miners" would surely lose his job.

As there was no one willingly coming forward to represent the will of the majority, each pushed the other as a representative, and some 60 drunk miners were thus pushed up front and became representatives of the miners. They made for a large delegation, too helpless and too poor.

What the members of the delegation at the outset presented to the negotiating delegation of the Headquarters for Coping With the Situation in the Sabuk-up office was that inasmuch as the incident had been touched off by reckless police meddling and their overreaction, there should be no questioning the criminal responsibility for the incident. Theirs was the profile of good citizens who would never riot indulging in such terrifying violence.

The marathon session lasted through the night for 6 hours. Most of the items of agreement they consented to at the end of the session, except for the resignation of the director of the union local and increased bonus, were all for coping with the situation, not for the realization or compromise of their original demands. They were reflecting on themselves for having tried for fleeting stimulus and excitement to give outright vent to their long pent-up anger.

At 0730 hours on the 24th following the dramatic conclusion of the negotiations, the miners voluntarily released the wife of the director of the union local, Mrs Kim Sun-i, 46, who had been kidnapped and placed under house arrest, and sent her to a hospital. Then they removed the

barricades and began cleaning up the streets, and telephoned to the Headquarters for Coping with the Situation to send the necessary personnel to take over the armory. The armory and powder magazine, the security for which the miners had insured even more thoroughly during the 4 days of their occupation, were handed over to the police.

Sending in two plainclothes intelligence detectives as an advance party out of consideration for the reaction of the miners, the police took over the substation later at 1500 hours on the same day but the police seemed rather ill at ease when the miners welcomed them, clapping hands.

When the reporters came into Sabuk-ri where calm and order was now restored, the miners were vying with each other to tell their stories. Each producing a faded envelope containing petition or a bundle of papers, they asked the reporters if there was any way for them to regain their rights and interests which had been ignored.

The miners went at night in groups to visit the reporters at Kohan, 4 km from Sabuk, and each telling a different story, loudly emphasized to the reporters who were about to leave, that to them, the reporters, the cause of the incident should be more important than the incident itself. There had been no route for them to those who would listen to what they had to say, for so long that they were now so eagerly seeking out those who would take an interest in their problems.

The thirst of the miners for having their will reflected was as parched when an inquiry team of the New Democratic Party arrived. The miners contended that both administrative organs and the police were always protecting only the management, detaching themselves from reflecting the will of the miners and that one of the biggest reasons for the outbreak of this incident was in their attempt to clamp down hard on the demands of the miners by police power.

One miner asked [the inquiry team] "to delve into the reasons why we have done this, we who have been working silently in the face of dangers to our lives that may strike at any time." Another miner asked the team "to jot down the names of the people here who have talked with you national assemblymen and make sure to check back two months later if they have been kicked out."

When still another miner, who said he was in the second stage of anthracosilicosis, protested, "We have not been accorded a human treatment at all times is where the cause of this incident is. Why is it that neither the management nor the organs concerned treat the miners as human beings?" the other miners all hotly shouted "Right on!"

What is it really that compelled the miners to stage such a nightmarish rioting? How much and how long have they been living in the shadow? Let us examine the origin of the incident and the state of the miners.

Police Substation Chief and Up Chief Who have Deceived the Miners

The riot of the Sabuk miners was a byproduct stemming from the restrictions on the self-governed labor activities of the workers for 18 years under the old system. Outwardly, it began with dissatisfaction with the kept labor union and low wages but inwardly, it was the outright explosion of longstanding kinks such as the infringement of the rights and interests of the workers, the awareness of which had begun to develop even in the absence of vitalization of labor union activities, and the outrageous tyranny of the management.

Moreover, the lopsided meddling of government authorities, the attempt to repress the collective action of the miners, and overreaction to the protest of the miners, triggered the outbreak of the incident.

In the beginning, the Tongwon coalfield side announced on 31 March a decision on a 20 percent wage increase effective April, ignoring the demand of the National Mining Workers Union for a 42.75 percent wage increase for 1980. Dissatisfaction of the miners with the unilateral decision of the management disregarding their demand, mounted especially against the late effective date, not retroactive to January.

In particular, the miners were angry at Yi Chae-ki, 47, director of the union local, for having meekly acquiesced in the 20 percent wage increase as insisted by the management. Their anger was all the more intense because he had always been criticized for his adriotness in pursuing his personal fame and fortune. Anger at the proposed wage increase added to their longstanding dissatisfaction with the tyranny of the management at the kept labor union, the miners began showing signs of perturbation on 16 April. On 18 April, following the conclusion of their civil defense drill, the miners decided to question the incompetence and corruption of the union executive department, and some of the miners staged a sit-in in the union office, demanding the resignation of the director of the union local.

At that time, on information filed by the management, the Sabuk police substation chief came to the sit-in site and declaring the sit-in an illegal assembly, took the sit-in miners to the police substation along with the union local director Yi. At the police substation the miners obtained a memorandum from the union local director that he would convene an interim meeting of delegates on 21 April at 1400 hours and also received a promise for a permit for assembly from the police substation chief and up chief. But the union local director, after writing the memorandum at the police substation, went underground under cover of the police, nor was the promised permit for the meeting of delegates issued.

At about 1300 hours of the 21st the miners gathered at the union office, saying "let's hold a general meeting of the union," and decided to

question the police substation chief and up chief for failure to keep their promise. The police substation chief and up chief, appearing before the miners, said, ignoring the protest of the miners, "who do you think you are, telling us to come and go even before we had time to take our lunch?" and "what we said was intended to break up the assembly under provisions of the martial law, not a promise to issue permit" and the miners got angrier, as their ranks swelled to some 700.

On their part, the police reinforced the task force and posted it around the mine.

It was at about 2000 hours that arguments broke out between some drunken ones among the miners gathered on the open field in front of the mine and intelligence detectives.

The excited miners, joining forces, began grabbing the intelligence detectives by the throat, and the detectives tried to get away in their police jeep. In a frantic effort to get away, the jeep ran over a miner standing in front of it, and as the miners shouted "the jeep ran over a man," the jeep kept on fleeing the scene, running over still another miner.

Mistakenly believing that their two colleagues, who were run over, were dead, the miners began picking up picks and shovels, saying "Lets smash the police who squash people like insects."

Chronology of the Sabuk Miners Riot

--3 April 1979

Yi Chae-ki is elected (15:13) as the 6th director of the union local.

--15 April 1979

Unsuccessful candidate Yi Won-kap files objection with the National Mining Workers Union that four of the voting delegates for the successful candidate were ineligible.

--9 May 1979

The National Mining Workers Union declares the election of Yi Chae-ki null and void, but subsequently, appoints Yi as acting director five times. Factional strife and enmity within the union intensify.

--3 November 1979

Yi Chae-ki invites the delegates to Cheju Province and wins confidence vote (20:2).

--16 April 1980

Yi Won-kap and 25 other anti-executive department members go to Seoul and stage a sit-in in the Mining Workers Union, demanding increased wages (for January and February) retroactively and condemnation and resignation of the director of the union local.

-- 13 April 1980

Some 30 miners of the Yi Won-kap faction stage a sit-in in the union office, demanding the resignation of the director of the union local, and denouncing the 20 percent wage increase as unreasonable.

--21 April 1980 1400 hours

The miners stage a massive sit-in in the union office, questioning the non-issuance of permit for an interim meeting of delegates promised on the 18th. The miners hold the police responsible for the disappearance of Yi Chae-ki.

--21 April 1980 1400 hours

As some 300 sit-in miners drink and make wild utterances, the situation turns ugly. A police jeep seriously injures two miners. Some 700 excited miners riot and completely occupy Sabuk-ri.

--21 April 1980 about 2100 hours

The police substation is destroyed and fire set to the union office. The miners go wild in the streets, carrying torches.

-- 22 April 1980 at dawn

Some 2,500 miners and families join the riot. Yi Chae-ki's wife is kidnaped.

--22 April 1980 1000 hours

A 350-man police task force goes into action but is driven back by miners counterattack. Many people are injured. The police, with a force reinforced to 600 men, prepare for emergency.

-- 22 April 1980 2200 hours

Chairman Ch'oe Chong-sop of the National Mining Workers Union arrives at the scene but fails in negotiations attempt.

-- 23 April 1980 0500 hours

Policeman Yi Tok-su dies in line of duty.

The headquarter for Coping with the Situation broadcasts negotiation proposal flyers from the air. The rioting miners recommend acceptance of an 8-point demand such as the resignation of the director of the union local and amnesty for the riot.

-- 23 April 1980 1500 hours

The Headquarters for Coping With the Situation acknowledges Yi Won-kap as representative of the miners, and carrying acknowledgment paper in hand, attempts negotiation.

-- 23 April 1980 2000 hours

Negotiation begins at the up office and after a marathon session, 70 miners representatives reach a dramatic settlement at 0100 hours of the 24th.

-- 24 April 1980 0730 hours

Wife of Yi Chae-ki is released.

--24 April 1980 1000 hours

The miners remove the barricades and Sabuk-ri is reopened to vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

--24 April 1980 1200 hours

The armory is handed over to the police.

--24 April 1980 1500 hours

The police retake the Sabuk Police Substation. Order is restored in the streets. The miners disband.

The Internal Feud of the Labor Union Was Also Part of the Cause

Outwardly, the Sabuk miners riot exploded over such condescending non-commitment. But inwardly, there had been long smoldering embers.

The embers of the recent riot had been smoldering for one year as enmity and jealousy continued among union members following the election in the midst of noise of Yi Chae-ki as the sixth director of the local in April 1979.

In the union local director election characterized by plenty of wining and dining and other generous favors, Yi Chae-ki was elected by a close vote of 15 to 13 out of 29 duly seated delegates (one abstention) and the unsuccessful candidate Yi Won-kap took exception to four of the delegates, who voted for Yi Chae-ki, claiming that they were ineligible to vote.

The objection to the eligibility of the delegates concerned was accepted at once by the National Mining Workers Union, whereupon the factional strife between the two Yi's began exploding.

The two factions within the union stirred the union members, picking on each other, exposing each other's wrongdoing, and scheming to hurt the other, and in the mining village bar, they constantly caused scenes of vilification and denunciation and distrust.

The National Mining Workers Union, instead of seeking a fundamental solution to the problems of this troublemaker local, appointed Yi Chae-ki acting director of the local as many as five times successively. This worked to fan the rivalry of the two factions of the union.

In this power struggle, the management always supported from the wing director Yi of the local, the weaker of the two opposing factions, and enjoyed turning the union into a kept one. The opposition faction, making a mountain out of a molehill, denounced both the management and the union executive department, fueling the dissatisfaction of the union members.

Again, in the case of the National Mining Workers Union too, it is a fact that Chairman Ch'oe Chong-sop, sizing up next year's (1981) election aimed at expanding his own sphere of influence, has been tacitly extending support by remote control to Yi Won-kap in the form of maintaining the status quo.

The wicked propaganda and stratagem traded in their fighting became even more fierce last autumn as the flying sparks of them spread to the allegation that director Yi had embezzled union dues. Driven into the defensive, the union executive department invited all the duly seated

delegates to faraway Cheju Province on 3 November last year and sought a vote of confidence and got it 20 to 2. Such was the twists and turns it had gone through.

The opposition side of Yi Won-kap continued confrontation in extreme struggle such as sit-in, on the one hand, and contended that "the executive department, receiving tremendous help from the management in collusion, has become a kept labor union that held an illegal election, following which it has even staged a deluxe edition of a vote of confidence show."

The executive department rebutted: "The Yi side [of the opposition] is agitating and dividing the union members while chairman Ch'oe of the National Mining Workers Union is maneuvering them by remote control in order to build up his own forces for the next election."

Amid such factional whirlpool the wage increase rate for this year was fixed at 20 percent below the 25 percent of the state-operated coal mines, whereupon the anti-executive department faction began mounting an all-out offensive with the dissatisfaction of the miners added thereto. In particular, against the backdrop wherein the union had failed to properly discharge its duties, the tyranny of the management that unilaterally decided on the wage increase hiding behind the incompetent union and tried to appease the union workers, exerted a compound effect at the bottom.

Again, even though they were all miners alike, the union cadres under the aegis of the management had behaved as labor aristocrats, reigning over their fellow miners, and the impotence of the higher echelons of the union, only engrossed in factional strife to scramble for such aristocratic positions, putting aside the matter of reflecting the will of the union members, resulted in causing the explosion of the embers.

The Miners in the Pits

In our country there are altogether some 180 mines ranging in size from big mines such as the 7 coal mines under the Coal Corporation, the largest among them with 5,000 miners, to the smallest mine, the primitive toktae mine [a mine worked on a rental basis] with less than 100 miners.

The total number of miners working at these mines is some 53,000, including 14,000 at the mines under the Coal Corporation, and 39,000 at private mines. These miners, working as they are to dig coal with sweat in pitch-dark pits living under double sky, self-effacingly call themselves as "human moles," "sad pit beings" rather than industrial soldiers.

In the pits, the miners workplace, the working conditions are so bad that really pales the description "human moles."

The pits which are 700-1,000 meters underground where the miners do 8 hours of bare labor a day, boring and wiggling themselves in and risking dangers that may strike at any moment, are saturated with the stifling heat of the earth exceeding 30 degrees Celsius.

In the pits, where sitting down quietly doing nothing causes shortness of breath, the miners can hardly see their hands in the lantern light on account of the smoke and coal dust from the blasting of coal seams. To prevent inhalation of the coal dust, the miners enter the pits wearing dust masks but more often than not they take them off because they gasp for breath in the high heat of the earth and heavy exertion.

They have to wield their picks in crawling position, they have to haul and set up props, wading through ever present underground water.

Under a thorough contract wage system, komsu system, they must work more than others, must set up props more securely. On this account, in an effort to dig one more handful of coal, they even go and dig coal where a danger sign is posted, and in their zeal they hit their foreheads against the props and get trapped in collapsing coal seams, not once but several times a day.

In the pits which the miners call "prison without bars" there is no specially provided rest place. When tired beyond endurance, they simply sit down where they are, take off their underwear and squeeze out; the place is so dangerous that smoking is strictly prohibited.

Because the amount of work is directly related to their income, if they take a break, it is only for a fleeting moment, and whenever they feel hungry while wielding their picks, they eat what they carried in on their belts and that is their lunch.

That even as they work under such bad working conditions, the miners lose more of the rhythm [rhythm] of health and feel fatigue is because of their frequent nighttime work. As day shift and night shift alternate on a weekly basis, for the first 2-3 days, their life rhythm broken, they find their work harder to perform.

"We find it harder to get up in the morning every day. Even on a winter day the heat of the earth is so intense that only after 10 minutes of wielding the picks, we have to take off the underwear soaked in sweat and squeeze out, and even the air is polluted. We the miners call the pits the entrance to the purgatory." This is what a miner with 10 years experience said, describing their workplace.

Of course, in recent years, thanks to the effort of the government authorities and management, there has been some sizable improvement in the primitive conditions that prevailed only a dozen years ago such as the miners digging coal and carrying it out in the bucket or basket on their backs or pushing trailer-carts in the pits.

Still, the working conditions in our coal mines are still much too far away from a situation that would make the miners feel proud as career blue-collar workers, and their working conditions are becoming more difficult as the coal seams lead deeper underground.

At present our country's coal mines go 30 meters deeper on average every year. Every time the coal seam goes 30 meters deeper, the temperature of the heat of the earth rises 1 degree higher.

Let us hear what sonsanbu [senior miner] Chon T'ae-in, 42, of Sabuk Mine, Tongwon coalfield, has to say:

"It is not only the working conditions that are bad. Under a contract wage system, we have got to dig coal like mad in a scramble to earn one more penny of the daily wages. Even then, the komsu juggle the figures to cut our amount of work and downgrade us. After that, we have to have a cup of makkolli [a coarse fermented liquor] on our way home. This is not for merry-making but for cleansing ourselves of dissatisfaction, washing off the coal dust. With that, we can forget the troubles and ... With our daily wages so tight, what grows bigger is only the amount we charge to our credit account, but to us miners, a cup of wine on our way home is medicine."

They Hide the Disease That Has Struck Them

As work intensifies in the coal pits, the workplace of the miners, so intensify the dust, noise, heat, and humidity and the incidence of anthracosilicosis along with various kinds of other occupational diseases. On account of this, the incidence of anthracosilicosis is ridiculously higher than in foreign countries, and after 7-8 years as sonsanbu, they all invariably contract anthracosilicosis, whether or not they have worn dust masks.

According to National Mining Workers Union statistics, of our country's 50,000 miners examined, currently about 10 percent of them or some 5,000 miners have been diagnosed as germ carriers of anthracosilicosis, or one anthracosilicosis patient for every 10 miners. The statistics also show that the number of anthracosilicosis cases is increasing 3.5 percent every year.

On account of the increasingly worsening health and incidence of anthracosilicosis stemming from lack of oxygen and coal dust, the working life span of the miners does not go much beyond 10 years. Therefore, even as every day of their work is a fear-laden day, the most frightening thing to the miners is adding years as miners. This is so because even if a miner is fortunate enough to survive all the other dangers attending their work, he will inevitably become a victim of anthracosilicosis on account of the cumulative coal dust in his lungs in direct proportion to the number of years worked.

O Kil-hwan (sonsanbu of the Paekun pit) with 8 years of service behind him, even though he was diagnosed as in the first stage of anthracosilicosis in 1975, is still working in the pits as he has "no other way to make a living." Gaunt, he looks well over 60 years old, belying his 40 years of age.

"I have undergone annual checkups since 1975 but I have never been informed of the result, let alone treatment or recuperation. As I felt the disease was getting progressively worse, I went to Seoul last February and had a private examination, paying for it out of my pocket. I was urged to seek recuperation at the earliest possible date. So, getting the papers ready, I applied for recuperation to the company, but the management gave me the impression that they rather wanted me to retire. It appears that I would have to die a worthless death." This is what he said with shortness of breath even in a brief interview with a reporter.

Now he is too weak to work every day and his income is less than a half of what it used to be. Anyway, he is about to be demoted to the status of kanjoppu [part-time worker]. His five dependents are living with him in company housing but all that he has to show for his many years of work is several toe of rice [a toe is about 1.8 liters], utensils, plus a chest of work clothes, and he cannot even begin to think of recuperation.

Kanjoppu Kim Yong-mo, 48, of Sabuk Mine of Tongwon coalfield, was diagnosed as in the second stage of anthracosilicosis in 1977. From that time on, on the ground that his illness was too serious, he was transferred from the better paying position of sonsanbu to work outside the pits.

His monthly wage is 107,000 won more or less as kanjoppu for performing miscellaneous work such as coal screening or coal storage. His monthly income suddenly halved one morning, as head of household for a family of five including his wife and three children, he had to send his eldest, a middle school student of 16, to his relatives to live and still he finds it very hard to make both ends meet.

Much as they dread diseases, the more the miners feel there is something wrong with them, the more they try to pass up the annual checkup in most cases. This is so, because once they are diagnosed as victims of anthracosilicosis, they are either demoted to kanjoppu with less than a half pay or compelled to retire all but forcibly.

The sufferings the victims of anthracosilicosis go through, over and above the reduction in pay following job transfer, are unbearable ones on account of a languid feeling of loss of desire as if somebody has beat them up. A 10-meter walk along a 20-degree slope causes them shortness of breath and they have to sit down.

Once branded a patient of anthracosilicosis, a miner faces measures taken by the management threatening his already difficult house-keeping and more often than not is discharged, if he does not accept the measures. If a miner is discharged, He has to vacate the company housing and the coal scholarships to his children are ended. Moreover, once branded a patient of anthracosilicosis, a miner cannot find any mine that is willing to hire him.

Nor is there any point in going to the industrial accident compensation system, for under its present provisions there is no way to get compensation for the incipient and first stages of anthracosilicosis. Compensation begins with the second stage of anthracosilicosis, a serious condition, divided into 11 grades, resulting in a benefit equivalent to 200 days of average pay. So a miner, with anthracosilicosis, downgraded as husanbu [?reserve miner], receives 700,000 won in compensation at the most.

Retirement allowance is computed on the same logic, To be transferred in job or discharged on account of disease is grievous enough, but when it comes to computing the industrial accident compensation or retirement allowance, the downgraded last pay is used as the computation basis, so the sorrow is all the more intense.

Insecure Labor Environment Also Causes Family Breakdowns

The labor environment for the miners fraught with the danger of anthracosilicosis in addition to the very poor working conditions further sharpens their awareness of unease for the future, their awareness of accident. What is more, the dangers of accident on account of worn-out work equipment or insufficient safety facilities and the management of health subjected to hard work cannot but be a source of great worry.

Sin Ch'ang-son, 34, chikchoppo [?full-time miner] of pit 890 of Sabuk Mine, as he looked at himself growing weaker, was never for one day at ease with himself because of his worry for the future of his 4 dependents.

His monthly pay in his 7th year as miner is 250,000 won for full month's work of 28-29 days. To be sure, he is able to work full month because he is still young, but when he feels the fatigue relentlessly attacking him, he is sure he is falling victim to some disease and sudden fear strikes him.

The only thing he has to show for working as miner with his youth as capital is a two-room kungmin chut'aek [low-income housing] he bought two years ago at a cash price of 2,300,000 won, the loan for which he is still paying back on monthly installments.

As he began frequently feeling fatigue, a sense of exhaustion, since the beginning of the year, coupled with frequent respiratory troubles, he wants to visit a hospital but he is still unable to work up his courage to do so, fearful that his troubles may be diagnosed as anthracosilicosis.

"When I see my seniors retire on account of occupational diseases after working more than 10 years as miners without any security for old age, squander their meager retirement allowance for medical care, and go to the other world, I feel lonely as if I am seeing my own future in them." So depressing is his fear.

The immediate fear such as the dangers of accident, the high incidence of anthracosilicosis, and the difficulty in making a living, is a problem, to be sure, but another suffering to which the miners are subjected is the breakdown of their family life. Under the constant threat that a sudden accident will throw out the whole family into the streets penniless, no small number of miners' wives, dissatisfied with hardships and family life, leave their homes.

In fact, adultery represents about 90 percent of the cases handled by the mining village police. This provides a glimpse of the extent of the breakdown of family life.

Let us hear what Pak No-song, 43, (sonsanbu of pit 875 of Sabuk Mine) has to say. A miner of 7 years experience, he hails from Ch'ongwon, North Ch'ungch'ong Province.

My wife ran away early last year. She might have been bored with the mining village life. As a matter of fact, it is true the hardships in making a living make things difficult all around, but when you come home after wrestling with your pick all day, it is hard enough to take of yourself, let alone conjugal life. Because of dissatisfaction with workplace and inferiority complex stemming from being a miner, one comes to drink frequently and... ." He has completely given up his family life, living in company dormitory. He has sent his 4-year-old daughter to his relatives to live, sending money for her support.

The grim reality, a future without guarantee for a tomorrow--the inferiority complex the miners feel in life deep in their hearts--at times makes them too self-effacing. The miners frequently say "if the leper is at the 100th on the human scale of 100, we are at the 99th," or even think that "of the 134 job classifications in our country, the miner is the 133d." Such unease and inferiority complex of each and every miner are manifested in their restlessness to leave the mine at the earliest possible date. Once they have enough money to go to the city and rent a room, they cannot go fast enough to jump into the labor market for any odd job.

In fact, the turnover of miners is considerably high. This phenomenon of high turnover naturally works to lower the skill standards of the miners and on its part, the management increasingly hires miners on a temporary job basis to cut back payroll expenses, with the result that the dangers of accident and the security of pits are growing worse.

Confrontation at the Risk of Life

The coal mining operations of the miners are death confrontation at the risk of their lives.

If heaps of coal collapse, there is no escaping from death; if props give way blocking a pit, it is a trip to the other world. What is more, the danger of gas is always present, and so is the danger of explosives such as TNT in the pits. Because of the presence of such dangers, there have been many major accidents.

In 1977, in the fire of Changsong Coal Mine, 12 miners died of smoke inhalation and 260 others were injured. In 1979, in the explosion of Hambaek Coal Mine, 26 miners died and 37 others suffered major and minor injuries. Accidents at coal mines usually have the high risk of being major ones.

The casualties in our country's coal mines are ridiculously high compared to foreign countries. On the basis of 100 tons of coal produced, the casualties in our country are 2.4 times as high as 4 miners in Japan, 22 times as high as 0.5 miners in Britain, or 11 miners a day.

Responsible for such high casualty rate are the aged mining facilities and the evasion on the part of the management to reinvest in facilities, leaving primitive production methods alone without doing anything about them and neglecting safety facilities.

In the case of advanced mining countries such as the United States and Australia, all work processes such as excavation and transportation of coal have been mechanized, but in our country even the basic mechanization such as "coal pick" and "auger drill" based on the rock drill theory still lingers barely at 5 percent.

On account of such primitiveness of coal extracting technology, the dangers of accident are high while the amount of coal extracted lags way behind. For example, the amount of coal extracted per miner per day in our country is 1.1 tons on average, that of the United States is 7.7 tons, West Germany 3.4 tons, and Australia 9 tons.

In particular, in the case of foreign countries, the coal seams are even and thick and so their working conditions are comparatively easy but the coal seams in our country have varying patterns, very crooked, and go deeper and thus are inevitably attended by dangers.

As of the end of last year the average depths were 414 meters for state-operated mines and 191 meters for private mines, and the depths are growing 20-30 meters every year with growing attendant dangers. Because of this, the average annual death toll for the last 10 years in accidents of coal mines exceeds 200.

Last year the casualties at all mines nationwide included 247 dead and some 5,800 injured. For 1978, there were 195 dead and some 5,400 injured.

To see if management is paying any serious attention to the safety of the mines under such circumstances, let us hear what the miners have to say.

Chikchoppu Yi Chong-man of Sabuk Mine loudly denounces "In spite of the frequent accidents caused by occupational safety hazards, the company is not paying any attention to the installation of safety facilities or equipment." According to the miners, every time a safety inspector is known to be coming for inspection from the Ministry of Energy and Resources, the management usually spends as many as 15 days in making hasty preparations for inspection just enough to pass the inspection, hoodwinking the inspector and, stopping work in dangerous areas on the inspection day, shows to the inspector only safe, model workplaces.

Yi Chae-hwang, (35, chikchoppu), saying that when there are only two days of rest a month, repair and maintenance work found to be necessary during work days for coal cart rails or sleepers is frequently put off until the days of rest, continues "interested only in making money, the management has no concern at all for the safety of the miners who come and go."

Too, the miners, because of such attitude of the management to slight their lives and of the dangers constantly staring them in the eye, come to feel deep in their hearts that theirs is a life in which they have to work, laying their lives on the line every day.

Low wages Plagued by Contract Wage System Troubles

Are the miners, who are working under such bad working conditions, waging death struggle against the dangers staring them in the eye here and there, everywhere, really getting a fair labor price commensurate with their work?

According to a survey conducted by the National Mining Workers Union, the average wages paid by the coal mines nationwide for the second quarter of 1979, were 161,206 won for chikchoppu directly engaged in extracting coal in the pits, or an overall average of 156,424 won per month.

In addition as their skills are upgraded from humanbu to wonsanbu as they add years to their service, their wages are increased in only a little, but when the increasing number of their dependents is taken into account, difficulties in making a living always remain the same.

In the miners, there is neither hobong nor promotion. What there is, if the miners are taken ill, is transfer in job which in substance is a reduction in pay.

The monthly pay of the miners, an upward adjustment of which was made this year, still remains on the 180,000-200,000 won line although there are some differences by the job classifications. Moreover, because, in addition to being a daily wage system based on grading differences in the amount of work performed, under a contract wage-komsu system, it is a numerical value based on full-month work of 28-29 days, any downgrading by the komsu or any sick leave results in a considerable reduction in the amount of actual wages received.

Such wage level for the miners is way below the 241,210 won established as the standard cost of living for a family of five by a survey of mining villages conducted by the National Mining Workers Union last September.

Let us take a look at the case of Yi Chae-wan, 30, husanbu of Sabuk Mine who is said to have actually received a wage of 186,000 won on 4 April.

He is the head of household for a family of five, including his wife and their first son and his two brothers attending middle school and high school respectively. He showed his household expense account book recording 50,000 won for rice, 48,000 won for supplementary food-stuffs, 17,000 won for tobacco, barbershop, and clothing, 40,000 won for school expenses of the two brothers, 3,000 won for briquet, 3,500 won for assessments such as sanitation fee, and interest payment of 8,000 won.

But the wage system of the Coal Corporation or private mines is tightly organized more than any other industry. This is so because nominally, the wage includes all the allowances without a single exception as provided by the Labor Standard Law.

The wages of the miners include the base pay and allowances for welfare, pit work, night differentials, public holidays, weekly days of rest, and scholarships, and are paid after the withholding of income tax, rice ration, union dues, and company housing fee.

But in working out the wages, the management juggles the figures, taking every advantage of the thorough contract wage-komsu system which grades the amount of work per ton of coal extracted, per set of props put in place, per meter of tunnel excavated, and as a result, all the allowances under various headings are really nominal without substance.

Another problem that depresses the livelihood of the miners is the fact that even as the unit value of the amount of work performed is so tight, the working conditions are gradually growing worse and that the wages of the miners are inevitably growing lower proportionately.

What is more, the worn-out coal extracting facilities, slowing down the pace of operations, frequently result in greatly hampering the coal extracting efficiency.

To the miners, too, their attachment to living or their hope for tomorrow is just as important. So they intend to earn as much money as possible as soon as possible to liquidate their life as miners but what they really have left is nothing but a growing number of children, dread diseases, and impoverishment.

Chon Che-hyong, 38, sonsanbu of pit 710 of Sabuk Mine, saying "prices in the mining village are higher than in the city, and there is no more to squeeze out of the already squeezed life," continued excitedly "I don't know why the management points to the coal price every time it hears a voice for wage increase. Isn't it its true intention not to yield an inch in pursuing its profits?"

Mrs. Yi Sam-nye, 31, wife of a miner who is working as sonsanbu at Sabuk Mine, saying that it was her misfortune to have a miner for husband, tearfully said:

"What has come of 11 years of married life is nothing but the growing number of children and the illness of husband. Still we cannot make a living except in a rented room. It breaks my heart to see husband report to work every day to lay down his life on the line for what he calls occupation that is hardly enough to make a living. It is already 5 years since I gave up going to my maiden home for the sorrow of being treated with contempt as the wife of a miner."

The Miners Who Weep Under the Machinations of the Company

It may be that why the wages of the miners are on such a low level in terms of structure, a level below the minimum cost of living, basically has to do with the government policy to keep the coal prices low, but the wage machinations under the tyranny of the management are also becoming a big factor.

To wit, the formula for computation of the miners wages based on the framework of a contract wage system has the arbitrariness of the komsu to intervene in the process of evaluation of the amount of coal extracted.

The management, taking advantage of such blind spot of arbitrariness, has put komsu who are clerical workers, out front and molded the miners wages in any shape they wanted. In grading work from A to D, the komsu under orders of the management, can easily downgrade work as C and D,

and this kind of downgrading is more extensively done especially for the wages of the last 3 months of the year which form the basis for next annual wage increase.

Not content with such lowering of the wage basis, the management again downgrades work after an upward adjustment of wages and as a result, it frequently happens that 2-3 months after the wage increase, the increased wages revert to the same old wages.

There is still another opportunity that the management takes for deliberate juggling. Conducting outside the pits instead of in the pits the evaluation of the quality and quantity of coal extracted, the management takes advantage of the loss of coal happening in the course of the coal carts leaving the pits, in the evaluation. The coal loaded in the carts to overflowing in the pits gets compacted by the shock as the carts travel hundreds and thousands of meters, by the time the carts reach outside the pits, and thus the amount of coal extracted is underevaluated.

This is not all of the tyranny of the management. For reprimanded miners, the management metes out punishment at time of reprimand in the form of reduction in pay, but even after the punishment was meted out, when the bonus time comes around, the management again reduces the bonus by 40-60 percent, thus meting out double punishment.

To see how severe the wage juggling by the management is, let us sample some of the actual cases.

Chong Paek-won, 41, (husanbu of pit 820, Sabuk Mine), with 6 years service, found that his wage for February 1980 was not much different in amount from his wage for February 1978 for 25 days of work. To examine the breakdown of his wage, his wage for February 1978 totaled 157,997 won less the withholding of 23,178 won or 134,819 net, against which his wage for last February totaled 163,972 less the withholding of 16,309 won or 147,663 won net. This means that his monthly income has increased no more than 12,800 won in 2 years.

This comparison of Chong's wages, when taking account of the 35 percent wage increase in 1978 and 30 percent wage increase in 1979, shows that it is impossible to make sense of the computation, but precisely such is the juggling of wages on the part of the management which makes the miners cry.

Cases of the management's disregard for the miners of its tyranny are too many to enumerate. The company store for daily necessities in the mining village is run by a relative of Chairman Yi Yon of Tongwon Coalfield, and this relative of Yi Yon's is profiteering by selling goods at prices higher than general retail prices, rather than rendering

services for the miners. The miners of the Sabuk mining village are paying actually 30 percent more for their daily necessities than in Wonju city, and even compared with their neighboring mining village, their prices are still higher, thus adding to their burden for making a living. In addition, when charging their purchases, the miners have to pay additional charges, for example, an additional charge of 50 won per bottle of soju. Then there are other paddings by middlemen merchants.

Thus in this village the following saying has long been making the round: "Money passes from coal-stained hands into the hands wet with water." Nevertheless, in an effort to monopolize its sales right to the miners, the company store not only prevents other merchants from doing business in the village but blocks the city bus from making its run into the company housing compound in order to prevent the miners from making their purchases elsewhere.

Again, the management, arbitrarily computing allowances or retirement allowances for discharged miners or retiring workers, has incurred their anger. There were many among the discharged miners who, still holding grudges against the company, took the lead in extreme actions in the recent incident.

The miners said that every time wage dispute arose, the management lamented its figures in the red, but that, because of their long pent-up resentment against such arrogance, the management was merely aggravating their ill feeling: "Chairman Yi who started out with Tongwon Coalfield, bought deluxe gold links and increased affiliate companies by 7, didn't he? If this is not a case of the management having got fat with every imaginable kind of trickery and tyranny, sucking up our blood and sweat, what is?"

Protection of the Miners Rights and Interests Urgently Required

What exploded had to happen in a situation that there was no one who would lend a willing ear to the dissatisfaction and demands of the miners nor was there found any route which would be a helping hand in solving the problems. In particular, as more recently the management, which has gained a tight grip on the labor union, neglected labor administration and failed to render basic services for the miners, their dissatisfaction intensified even more.

The labor union, unable to carry out its inherent activities, has become a parasite on the management but even in such situation, the confrontation, enmity, and jealousy of the higher echelons of the union drove the miners into a crucible of anger, an anger that cannot be pacified. In particular, the management, having formed an intelligence team with a relative of the company chairman's relative

in charge, kept the miners under surveillance and indulged in every kind of tyranny such as punishing the slightest error, but the union which has become a kept one, did not have the nerve to come forward to block it.

What is more, the management, which has established even undercover surveillance teams, has pursued a strong policy of punishment first, trampling on the opinions of the miners, and as a result, the miners could not feel free to talk even among themselves, opening up their hearts, and labor-management talks were out of the question, to begin with.

Even amid the working conditions threatening life and a dark life environment, the miners were unilaterally forced to hold back their dissatisfaction and anger against such management's tyranny and low wages. In particular, when the miners concluded that government authorities such as the competent organs or the police would never care about their problems, there was no other way for them to give vent to their dissatisfaction.

In the final analysis, the Sabuk miners riot was a result inevitably stemming from the dregs of the old system that only unilaterally forced sacrifice and self-control on the miners, blocking the route to a fundamental solution to their problems.

Actually, such after effect of the Sabuk case is appearing as a reality everywhere in the T'aebaek coalfield such as the Hansong Coal Mine and Oryong Coal Mine, and the situation urgently calls for measures to protect the basic rights and interests of the miners consistent with the self-regulation of labor union activities as well as with the current of the new times.

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